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STATESMEN
SERIES

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T. E. KEBBEL

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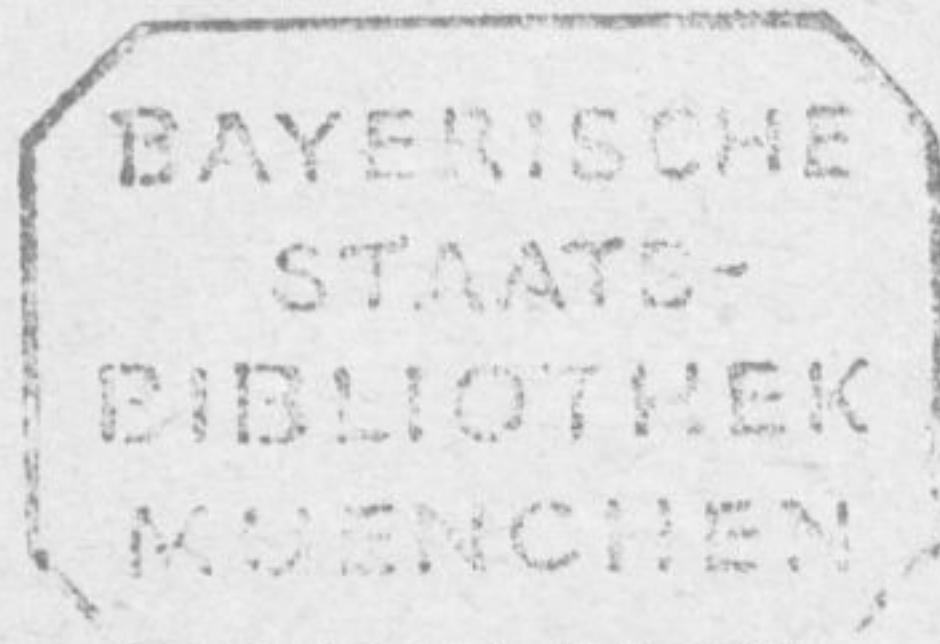
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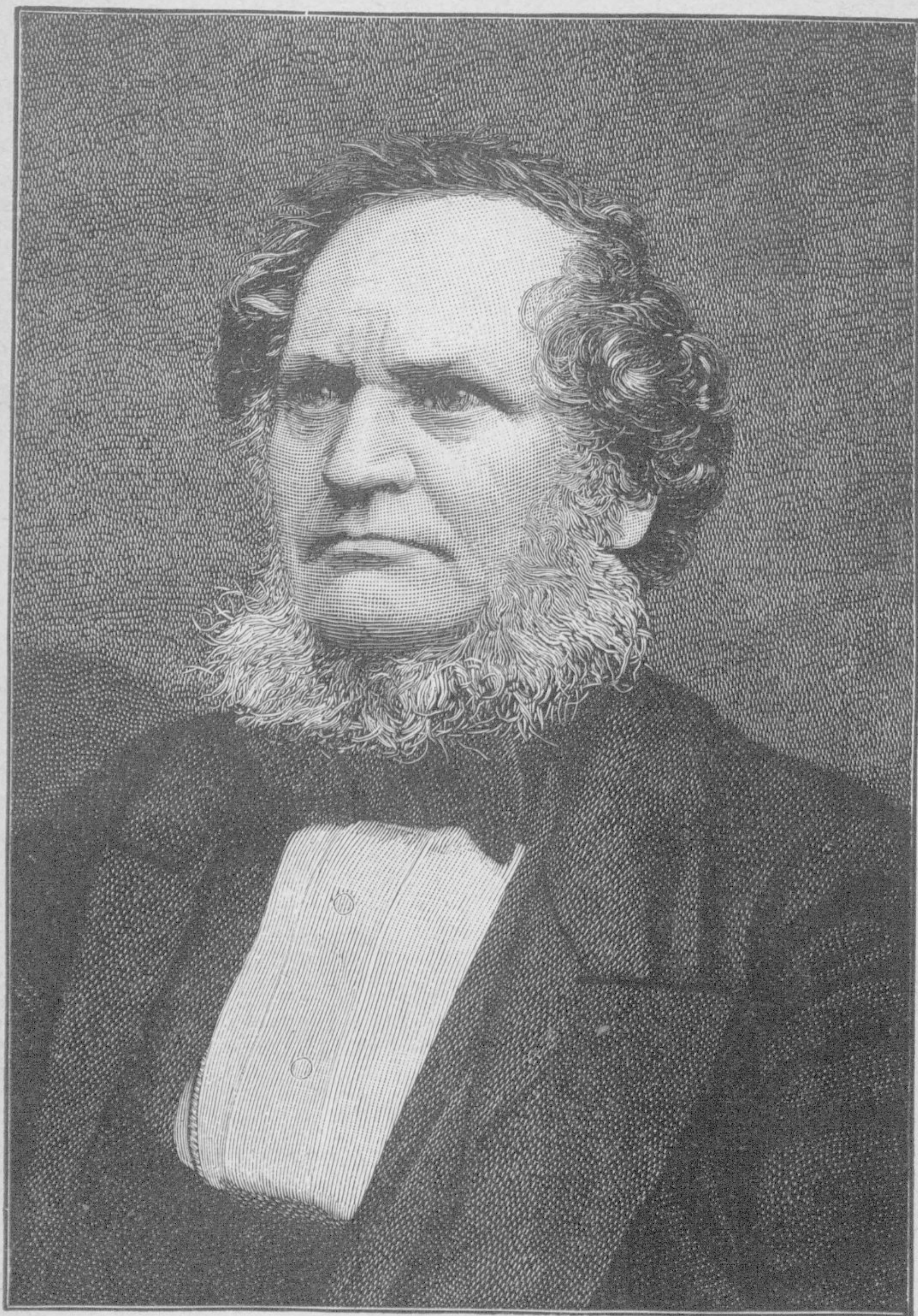
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THE STATESMEN SERIES.



THE EARL OF DERBY, K.G.

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MR. STANLEY, AFTERWARDS 14TH EARL OF DERBY.

(Photo by S. A. Walker, Regent Street.)

THE STATESMEN SERIES.

LIFE OF
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K.G.

BY
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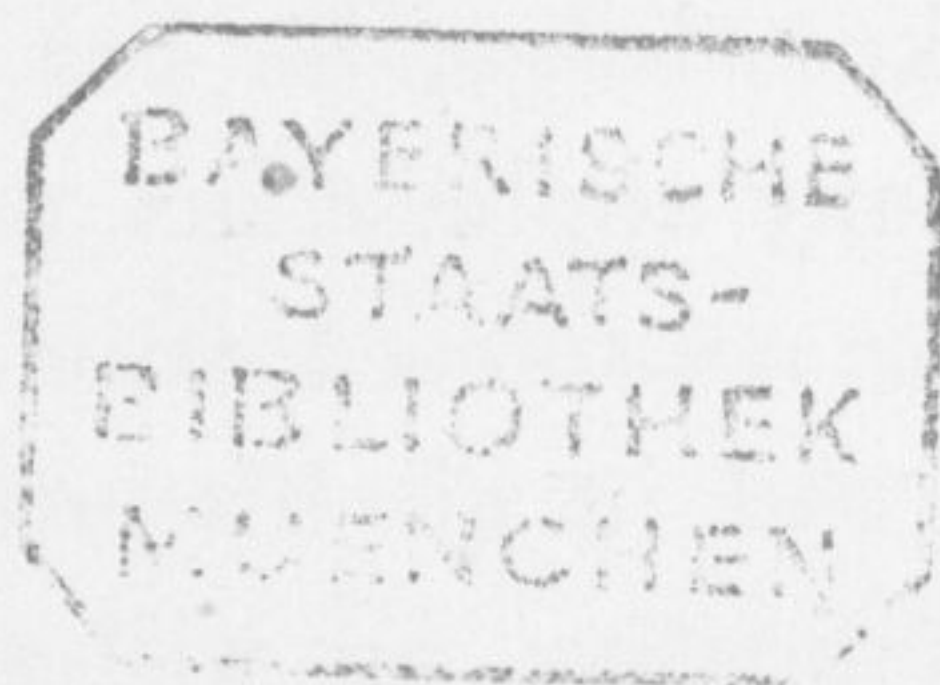
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PREFATORY NOTE.

IN preparing short memoirs of statesmen who have so recently departed from among us that no complete Lives of them have yet been written, the writer who travels beyond those records of their actions which are supplied by ordinary books of reference, reviews, and newspapers, can rely only on such communications as friends or relatives may be willing to contribute without prejudice to the claims of the future biographer, for whom, of course, all papers and correspondence possessing any real value are most properly reserved. In the case of men whose careers have been thoroughly explored, the author of a volume like the present has nothing to do but to reproduce what is already known in as concise and popular a style as he is able to command, or, in other words, to reduce a life-size portrait to a miniature. I do not mean to say that, even so, the task is an easy one; but it can be done in a library; the author has all his materials before him; and knows

from the beginning exactly what he has got to put into the book which he is writing. But in default of such accessible knowledge, he has to do all his work for himself. Many applications must be made, with the fear of being considered troublesome constantly before his eyes; and in all his intercourse, even with the most communicative, he will find that there are many inquiries which he cannot push beyond a certain point. I, myself, have experienced nothing but kindness and courtesy from such relatives and colleagues of the late Lord Derby as I was in a position to address; yet I cannot help feeling that the book is still imperfect, though with the assistance I have received it should at least be free from error.

From those who acted with Lord Derby in public life I have received some political information of considerable interest; and I am particularly indebted to Admiral Wyndham Hornby, who lived with Lord Derby nearly thirty years on terms of the closest intimacy, for numerous anecdotes of his conduct and his habits in private life, which, even when I have not been permitted to repeat them, have formed ingredients in my general estimate of Lord Derby's character. I have to thank the Hon. F. S. Lawley for the few facts which I have given belonging to Lord Derby's connection with the turf; and also for one or two amusing stories, in which the part assigned to Lord Derby is said by those who knew him best to be so extremely characteristic of him that no apology is required for inserting them. Last, but

not least, I may mention my friend Mr. E. Walford, whose collection of notes have been most serviceable.

The published works from which information is to be obtained, independently of periodical literature, are the Croker Papers, the Correspondence of William the Fourth and Lord Grey; the Greville Memoirs, which, however, must be read with caution; the Life of Lord Lyndhurst, by Sir Theodore Martin; Lord Malmesbury's Diary in "Memoirs of an Ex-Minister"; the Life of Lord Melbourne, by Mr. M'Cullagh Torrens; the Life of Lord Palmerston, by Lord Dalling and the Hon. Evelyn Ashley; the Life of the Prince Consort; the Dispatches of the Duke of Wellington; and the Life of Bishop Wilberforce. But it must be remembered that I come before, not after, the *vates sacer*, whoever he may be, who is destined to give us a full and perfect portraiture of the great Patrician, to sound all the depths and shallows of his very blended character, and to show the man as he really was, stripped of all conventionalities.

T. E. K.

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LIFE OF THE EARL OF DERBY, K.G.

CHAPTER I.

YOUTH AND EARLY MANHOOD.

1799–1824.

The Stanleys—Their representatives under the Tudors and Stuarts—
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—Eton and Oxford—Member for Stockbridge—Maiden speech.

EDWARD GEORGE GEOFFREY SMITH STANLEY, fourteenth Earl of Derby, was born at Knowsley Park, in Lancashire, on the 29th of March 1799. The family were of Norman origin, and came over with the Conqueror. The name which they bore down to the reign of Henry the Third was Aldethly, or Audley, though whether they brought it with them or derived it from the property which was granted them in Staffordshire remains uncertain. They acquired the manor of Stanlegh, or Stonelegh, in the same county, by intermarriage with the Saxon family who had owned it for several centuries, and they then assumed the name by which they are known in

English history. Sir John Stanley, a descendant of William de Stonelegh, married Isabella Lathom, with whom he obtained the Lathom and Knowsley estates, and was also the first feudal proprietor of the Isle of Man. His grandson, Thomas Stanley, was summoned to Parliament as the first Baron Stanley in 1455, and was father of the second Lord Stanley, Constable of England and Knight of the Garter, who, after the battle of Bosworth in 1485, was created an earl by Henry VII. The Stanley of Flodden Field was Sir Edward Stanley, a collateral relation.

The earldom has descended in a direct line through the famous earl of Elizabeth's days, whose housekeeping was so magnificent that hospitality was said to have perished with him. He was Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire and Cheshire at the time of the Spanish Armada, and charged with the defence of those counties. His grandson was James, the seventh earl, the famous cavalier, and husband of Charlotte de Tremouille, who figures in *Peveril of the Peak*, though Sir Walter Scott has taken strange liberties with the dates and facts of the period. James's widow died in 1663, and her son, the eighth earl, in 1672, his death being hastened, it is said, by the ingratitude of Charles the Second, and the ruinous condition to which the family estates were reduced. Both Knowsley and Lathom were in ruins, and the eighth and ninth earls are said to have resided chiefly at Bidston, a manor belonging to them in Cheshire. William Richard, the ninth earl, used to say that he had no estate in Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, or Derbyshire from which he could not see another of equal or greater value which had been lost through loyalty to the King. It is curious that the Rye House conspirators, in 1683,

should have held one of their meetings at Bidston ; and it is pretty certain that after the Restoration the attachment of the Stanleys to the Stuarts began to cool. In 1687 James, the tenth earl, was dismissed by James the Second from the Lord-Lieutenancy of Lancashire ; and henceforth the family seem to have acted with the Whig Party. The two previous peers had nursed the relics of the family property, which were still considerable, so that the tenth earl was able to rebuild Knowsley, which thenceforth became the family seat. Lathom House passed by marriage to the Ashburnhams in 1714, and from them to the ancestors of the present owner, Lord Skelmersdale.

On the death of the tenth earl, in 1735, the direct descendants of the first Earl of Derby became extinct, and the sovereignty of Man passed to the Duke of Athol, whose ancestor, the Marquis of Athol, married a daughter of the seventh earl. The peerage was inherited by Sir Edward Stanley of Bickerstaffe, a descendant of a younger brother of the second earl, and it was his grandson, born in 1752, who was the great friend of Fox and the Prince of Wales. His name appears in the betting book at Brooks's, where heavy odds were recorded against his "going up in a balloon." He was a celebrated billiard player ; but he will be recollected by posterity chiefly through his connection with the turf, and as the founder of the two great Epsom races, the Derby and the Oaks. His second wife was Miss Farren, the actress, who, according to report, taught her young relative elocution ; but Lord Derby himself, who often talked of this lady, never alluded to her lessons, which, had the report been true, he was almost certain to have done. This Lord Derby, who died in October 1834,

was succeeded by the well-known naturalist and ornithologist, whose aviary at Knowsley was celebrated throughout Europe. He married, June 1798, his cousin, Charlotte Margaret, second daughter of the Rev. Geoffrey Hornby, and sat in the House of Commons as Member for Lancashire. He died on the 30th of June 1851, and was succeeded by the brilliant statesman who is the subject of the present memoir.

Thus it will be seen that of which the French call "illustration" the Stanley family had abundance. They were, in fact, always before the public in one guise or another. They furnished several Lord-Lieutenants of Ireland; and by almost every sovereign in turn, down to the end of the 17th century, were placed in great public employments. They were closely connected with the blood royal, and in the time of the Tudors they stood in the line of succession. Mary, the younger sister of Henry VIII., on whose descendants he settled the crown in remainder, married Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, whose daughter Eleanor married Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, whose daughter became the Countess of Derby, so that her son, the fifth earl, was directly descended on the mother's side from Henry the Seventh. Since 1735, however, the Earls of Derby have descended from a branch of the family unconnected with this illustrious alliance.

Lord Derby was educated at Eton and at Christ Church, Oxford, and won the Chancellor's prize for Latin verse with a poem on Syracuse in 1819. The versification is more spirited than smooth, and contains some political reflections on the state of Sicily at that time, with which it is interesting to compare his speeches at a later date, notably in 1864 and 1865. Why he did not distinguish

himself still further at Oxford is a question which many persons will ask themselves. But the steady and continuous application necessary to secure the highest honours in the schools was a very different thing from the composition of two or three hundred Latin hexameters, which Lord Derby, with his Etonian training, would probably have thrown off in a few days. Be this as it may, however, he left Oxford without taking a degree, and in 1821 was returned to Parliament, in the Whig interest, for Stockbridge.

He himself has told us, in one of his speeches on Reform in 1867, how he came to sit for that borough, which was sold by a West Indian planter to a Tory peer, and by him to a Whig borough-monger.

My Lords, I must confess that I myself entered Parliament for the first time when a very young man, under circumstances which I do not think to have been strictly within the spirit of the Constitution. It so happened that a West Indian proprietor of high Tory principles found himself, as West Indian proprietors sometimes did—even before the passing of the negro emancipation—in pecuniary difficulties. He was the possessor of property, however, which included a borough, over which, although nominally there was voting of scot and lot, he had absolute and entire control. It happened, also, that a wealthy Whig peer was desirous of increasing his political influence, and he requested me—then a young man, and without the slightest connection with the borough in question, or with the neighbourhood—to accept the seat which was to be placed at my disposal. And so far, my lords, was the complaisance of the Tory proprietor of the borough carried, that he not only vacated his seat in the middle of the session but also went down in person and introduced to the constituency, whom he had sold, the nominee of the Whig peer to whom he had sold them. I am obliged to confess that a few years afterwards I was guilty of such ingratitude as to vote that this borough should stand in Schedule A.

Whether Lord Derby took lessons from Miss Farren or not, there was nothing in his style of speak-

ing in the slightest degree theatrical or melodramatic; and with all his wit, humour, and occasionally colloquial pleasantry, he never overstepped the limits of refinement and simplicity. It is curious that with his taste for oratory he should have been four years in Parliament before he made his maiden speech. In 1823 he was appointed to sit on a gas committee, of which his father was chairman, and, in March 1824, he addressed the House of Commons for the first time on this not very promising subject. But he spoke so well that Sir James Mackintosh said:

He had heard with the greatest pleasure the speech which had just been delivered by his hon. young friend behind him—a speech which must have given the highest satisfaction to all who heard it, and which afforded the strongest promise that the talents which the hon. member had displayed in supporting the local interests of his constituents would be exerted with equal ardour and effect in maintaining the rights and interests of the country. No man could have witnessed with greater satisfaction than himself an accession to the talents of that House, which was calculated to give lustre to its character, and strengthen its influence, and it was more particularly a subject of satisfaction to him when he reflected that those talents were likely to be employed in supporting principles which he conscientiously believed to be most beneficial to the country.

Mr. Stanley brought a great accession of strength to the Opposition, which at this time was at a very low ebb in Parliament. Yet it is curious that in the very first important speech on public affairs which he addressed to the House of Commons, he advanced those Conservative opinions which were destined just ten years afterwards to sever him from the Whig Party.

CHAPTER II.

MR. STANLEY UNDER LORD GREY.

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It was on the 6th of May 1824, when Mr. Stanley had just completed his twenty-fifth year, that Mr. Hume moved a resolution on the Irish Church to this effect, "That it is expedient to inquire whether the present Church Establishment of Ireland be not more than commensurate to the services to be performed, both as regards the number of persons employed, and the incomes they receive." As soon as Hume sat down Stanley rose, and took his stand on the broad principle that "no circumstances could justify an

interference with the property of the Church which would not equally justify an interference with landed, funded, and commercial property."

Proceeding into details, he contradicted Hume's statement about the incomes of the clergy, and then laid down that in his opinion

the four great evils under which Ireland laboured were the want of a resident gentry, the want of capital, the want of employment, and the want of education. All these four wants, he was ready to assert, would be materially increased by diminishing the income of the clergy. It was of the utmost importance to the best interests of the people of Ireland that there should be a class of men, liberal, enlightened, necessarily well educated, compellible and now compelled to spend their incomes in the country; a class of men obliged by the decencies of life, if not by higher motives, to live temperately, honestly and soberly, and diffusing the benefits of their influence and example.

Mr. Plunket, speaking from the Tory side of the House, complimented Mr. Stanley in terms which show that his distinguishing excellence in debate had already been appreciated by his hearers. He "could not allude to that hon. member without congratulating him and the House on the proofs he had so recently evinced of sound intelligence and manly eloquence; and on the resources which he had exhibited in manifesting his capability of drawing upon them during the exigency of a long debate, for answers to objections that had been incidentally taken." I have quoted this passage to show that Mr. Stanley's superiority in debate was recognised from the first, and that it seems really, as Lord Macaulay afterwards said of it, "to have resembled an instinct."

In the autumn of 1824 Mr. Stanley visited Canada and the United States in company with Mr. Labouchere, afterwards Lord Taunton, and Mr. Evelyn

Denison, afterwards Speaker of the House of Commons, and in 1872 created Viscount Ossington. In the following May he married the second daughter of Edward Bootle Wilbraham, Esq., created in 1828 Lord Skelmersdale, and, possibly owing to more interesting engagements, took no part in the debates of 1825. In 1826, however, he reappeared upon the scene, and supported the Ministerial proposal for releasing a large amount of bonded corn without payment of duty, as some alleviation of the distress prevailing in the agricultural districts. The measure was opposed by Lord Althorpe, but was carried eventually by a majority of a hundred and sixteen; and soon afterwards Parliament adjourned.

In 1826 Mr. Stanley exchanged Stockbridge for Preston, a rotten borough for a sound one, and so had his hands free for the great fight that was impending. But a good deal was to happen before that time arrived. In the autumn of 1826 came the illness of Lord Liverpool, and in the spring of 1827 the long and intricate negotiations which preceded the formation of Mr. Canning's Government. Mr. Stanley was one of those Whigs who seem to have had no hesitation in joining Mr. Canning, and the mere fact that he and others saw nothing in Mr. Canning's disapproval of Parliamentary reform to prevent such an alliance, shows how lightly the question must have sat upon the Whig Party at the time, and how little they could then have anticipated that it would soon become the question of the day. The Corn Laws, the Roman Catholic question, and foreign policy, were the three great subjects of controversy which occupied public attention, and on none of them was there any great difference of opinion between the coalcscing parties.

Mr. Canning's Corn Bill, which was supported by Mr. Stanley, had been drawn up in concert with Lord Liverpool. The Roman Catholic claims had always been supported by one who was deemed a Tory of the Tories, Lord Castlereagh, as well as by Mr. Canning himself. On foreign policy the distinction between the moderate men on both sides was the shadow of a shade. The Conservative Whigs and the Pittite Tories were divided from each other by no real difference of principle except on one point, and that did not arise in a form to provoke any collision between them during Mr. Canning's lifetime. The two parties, indeed, on this question had now changed places. It was now the "unbending" Tories who took up the Whig principle of dictating to the Sovereign what Ministers he should employ, and the Whigs who stood by Canning in maintaining the independence of the Crown.

The country was now peaceable. The Coercion Acts, which had afforded the Opposition some of their sharpest weapons against the Ministry, were forgotten. The Tory Party, from 1822 to 1827, had shown itself thoroughly alive to the practical wants of the nation, and ready to enter on a path of useful and necessary reform.* Under these circumstances there could be no reason whatever why a Whig of the Stanley type should not act cordially with a Tory of the Canning type. Neither sacrificed anything by the junction. That Stanley was perfectly well aware of the danger of premature coalitions and the value of political consistency; that he understood character to be of all things the most precious under a system of Party Government; is shown by his letter to Sir Robert Peel in 1835. But it is clear that in 1827

* Cf. Sir G. C. Lewis's *Administrations of Great Britain, 1783-1830*.

he saw no offence against either in a union with the great representative of Liberal Toryism.

He accepted accordingly from Mr. Canning the office of Under Secretary to the Colonies, and retained it under Canning's successor, Lord Goderich. But he declined to serve under the Duke of Wellington, and gave his reasons for it in a speech which has often been commented on by subsequent critics and memoir writers. He, in fact, drove the Government into a corner from which there was no escape. If there had not been any serious difference of opinion between these gentlemen and Mr. Canning why had they deserted him, and broken up the Tory Party rather than become his colleagues? If there had been, why did they now say that their principles were his? To this question there was no answer but by the confession of personal motives, which, however carefully concealed, everybody alike divined. The passage, however, which is the most interesting for our present purpose is the following :—

I am convinced that the old and stubborn spirit of Toryism is at last yielding to the increased liberality of the age—that Tories of the old school, the sticklers for inveterate abuses under the name of the wisdom of our ancestors, the "*laudatores temporis acti*," are giving way on all sides, that the spirit which supported the Holy Alliance, the friend of despotism rather than the advocate of struggling freedom, is hastening to the fate of its merits, and that all its attendant evils are daily becoming matters which belong to history alone. I have hopes that the gentlemen who no more than a year ago displayed so much ancient and exploded Toryism on their temporary exclusion with the recovery of their offices have recovered their good humour, that calm retirement and a summer's sojourn in the country have brought them to their senses, and have shown them how blind they were to the real interests of the country.

I may be allowed to point out in this place that Stanley's admiration of Canning, and readiness to

serve under his banner, is one more tribute to the memory of that great statesman whom Whigs and Tories have alike laboured to depreciate.

In the debates on the disenfranchisement of East Retford in 1828, Stanley advocated the transference of the franchise to Birmingham in opposition to the Government plan of extending it to the hundred of Bassetlaw, in which Retford was situated. But even then there was no suspicion of the "mighty crash" that was at hand. The session of 1828 closed amid the almost universal expectation that the Duke was in for his life, as with the display of a little more political prudence and self-control he easily might have been.

In the great debate of 1829 on the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, Mr. Stanley took no part; but he voted, of course, in the majority. He spoke shortly, but very well, on the suppression of the Roman Catholic Association, when he paid the following eloquent tribute to Sir Robert Peel:—

No man who had listened to the various speeches which had been made by the right honourable gentleman but must be quite sensible that he felt deeply the sacrifices which a sense of duty compelled him to make. To that rigid sense of duty the right honourable gentleman had evidently sacrificed all private, all personal considerations. He had sacrificed, and must have known at the time that he was doing so, the power and influence which he had long possessed over a large and respectable body of individuals. He had even sacrificed something of reputation. He had sacrificed all this; and yet, in his opinion, the right honourable gentleman had conducted himself with perfect consistency and honour. He had only a choice of evils. He did choose, and at a great sacrifice to himself, and thereby proved himself superior to that feeling of pride which would dignify a pertinacious adherence to an opinion once expressed by the name of consistency. He might, if he had chosen to retire from office, have been lauded to the skies as the victim and martyr of Protestantism. . . . He might have gained a temporary popularity, but he would

have failed in his duty to his country. He might have preserved his consistency, but it would have been at the price of the serenity and tranquillity of the empire

The state of England at the opening of the year 1830 presented, as in 1829, few or no indications of the great storm that was approaching. The carriage of the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act, though it had alienated from the Government a section of the Tory party, had got rid of a troublesome question, and removed from the Ministerial path the principal difficulty which beset it. There was no apprehension at the time that Parliamentary reform would prove more or even equally formidable. Neither the Tory party nor its leaders were in any way committed against a moderate readjustment of the franchise such as at that time would have satisfied the great majority of reformers. Lord Althorpe, an advanced Whig, fully expected that Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington would take up the question and settle it as they had settled the Roman Catholic question. In the opinion of some competent witnesses, no general measure of reform need have been produced at all. But, even if some such measure was unavoidable, nothing was indispensable which a Tory Government might not very well have undertaken. The Protestant mutineers, even reinforced by a fresh body of Tory malcontents hostile to all changes in the electorate, would hardly have been able to defeat the Ministry, supported, as they would have been, by all the more reasonable Whigs; and had events taken this turn, Lord Palmerston and his friends would probably have rejoined the Government, to be followed very likely, at no distant date, by the Whigs who had served with Mr. Canning. A second

great measure carried against the opposition of the ultra-Tories by the help of the moderate Liberals must have led to a fusion between these last and the regular supporters of the Peel and Wellington administration, and in that case Mr. Stanley's accession to the Tory ranks would have taken place sooner than it did. How it was that what might have happened never did happen we shall soon see. In the meantime, in what light did the political situation present itself to the rising statesman soon to be recognised as the leader designate of the Whig party?

Goldsmith told Boswell that he took his religion from the priest as he took his coat from the tailor. And Mr. Stanley, like many others, on his entry into public life took his principles from his party in the same easy fashion. He was born a Whig, and he accepted the position probably without much reflection on it. By the time he entered Parliament the Whigs had outlived all the odium they had brought upon themselves by their sympathy with the French Revolution, while the Tories had outlived much of the credit which they had gained by their successful prosecution of the war. A young man of two-and-twenty had no difficulty in persuading himself that the Six Acts were tyrannical, that Queen Caroline was a persecuted lady, and that the restored Governments of the Continent were despotic and reactionary. There was nothing in the Toryism of 1820 to touch the imagination. But "liberty" was a word which had not yet been so far debased as to have lost all its powers to conjure, or all its hold over youthful minds full of the memories of antiquity, and fresh from Lucan and Demosthenes. Parliamentary reform was not yet taken up by the Whigs as part of their recog-

nised programme, and Mr. Stanley was not required to do more than support such limited proposals for the disfranchisement of particular boroughs as from time to time came before Parliament on proof of gross corruption or delinquency. He himself tells us, in his speech of March 4th, 1831, that he had long been in hopes that nothing more would be necessary. And we may fairly infer from his silence in 1822 and 1826, even apart from his subsequent union with Mr. Canning, that the necessity for Parliamentary reform upon a large scale had never taken hold of his mind before the accession of the Whigs to power, when they at once made it a party question, demanding the adhesion of all their regular supporters. It was not in Stanley's nature to do things by halves, as many passages in his life are sufficient to prove, and he threw himself into the Reform battle with all the impetuosity of his nature. But, in spite of the zeal with which he advocated Lord Grey's Bill, in spite of the scenes both in the House of Commons and out of it, which have ensured him so prominent a place in the history of that great measure, it is more than doubtful whether he was inspired by any well-founded or deliberate conviction. He would fight knee-deep for his party, but, as far as the principle was concerned, we should be inclined to suspect that Canning's great speech on the 25th of April 1822 more nearly expressed his real sentiments than Lord John Russell's on the same occasion.

But he was one of those many English statesmen who, entering public life with their part chalked out for them beforehand, do not stop to weigh the consequences of their actions till some startling development reveals them. He felt that the anomalies of

the existing system were too repugnant to common sense to be defended for a single moment when public attention had once been fixed upon them. They might have slumbered unnoticed for another generation if the party in power had been more prudent. The country was used to them. But when held up to observation they were doomed at once. These removed, however, Stanley seems to have thought that the country could be governed as before. The change, he said, would not endanger the legitimate influence of the aristocracy founded on their property, their services, and the immemorial relations of kindness and sympathy which subsisted between themselves and their dependants. No more, perhaps, it need have done had the Reform Bill been the first and last step in the enlargement of the Constitution—had we been able to say to the new forces then admitted within the pale of the governing classes, “Thus far and no farther.” The Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel saw that we could not say this. I do not think Lord Derby did. It did not occur to him that such changes are seldom demanded for nothing, or in deference to an abstract principle; or that the abuses of the old *régime* were only used as a stalking-horse by those who looked forward to the new one as likely to supply them with the means of accomplishing ulterior objects, which they carefully repudiated in Parliament. We have seen the same tactics and the same credulity exhibited quite recently in this country.

We must now recur to the session of 1830, when all was fair upon the surface, and “Dukism” seemed founded on a rock. Two opportunities were afforded to Mr. Stanley of speaking on the subject of reform between the opening of Parliament and the King’s

death. The first was on the Marquis of Blandford's Reform Bill on the 18th of February; the second was on the old East Retford question on the 5th of March. He opposed the scheme of the Marquis of Blandford, one of the discontented Protestant Tories, who now brought forward a Reform Bill, as it would seem, out of pure mischief-making; and in speaking of the East Retford franchise, he used these rather remarkable words—remarkable words, at all events, taken in connection with his speech in the following year, to which we have already referred—"I have always," he said, "been a friend to Parliamentary Reform, to a certain extent." Could Lord John Russell's measure, to be produced just one year afterwards, have been unfolded before his eyes at this moment, what would he have said to that? Probably what nine-tenths of the Whig party would have said to it.

The death of George the Fourth took place at three o'clock on the morning of Saturday, the 26th of June 1830, and on the 24th of July following Parliament was dissolved. Unfortunately for the Duke of Wellington's government, the Revolution of July broke out just as the general election began. In all western Europe there was a great outbreak of Liberalism. In France and in Belgium the population triumphed over the military. The unconstitutional acts of Charles X., which led to these results, were attributed by the Opposition speakers to the advice of the Duke of Wellington. They called on the English people to join heart and hand with the party of progress which was triumphant on the Continent, and not to be afraid of forcible resistance, which had broken down everywhere else. The agitation, of course, produced its

natural effect. The Government lost fifty seats. Even Stanley himself lost his seat at Preston to Orator Hunt, and sat in this Parliament for Windsor. On this occasion party feeling ran very high, and Mr. Stanley was with difficulty rescued from the fury of the Tory mob. He took refuge in the house of an adherent, who concealed him in a cellar ; and it happened oddly enough that when Colonel Stanley was standing for the borough as a Conservative in 1865, in the course of his canvass he came across this very man, and solicited his vote. The man told the story, and added that his politics were unchanged, and that he was not going to vote for the party who so nearly murdered Colonel Stanley's father.

The Whigs who had previously supported the Duke against the disaffected Tories, now withdrew their assistance, and actually coalesced with the party of Eldon, Wetherell, Winchelsea, and Knatchbull. Under the impression that the Wellington administration was impregnable, and that their only chance of office lay in another coalition, Lord Grey and his friends, previous to the general election, had not been unwilling to renew the negotiations which had been commenced on the retirement of Lord Liverpool. Lord Grey himself, though he had declined all dealings with Mr. Canning, was ready to entertain the idea of a junction with the Duke of Wellington. On this point we have the high authority of Mr. Disraeli. "Damn the Reform Bill!" said Lord Monmouth; "if the Duke had not quarrelled with Lord Grey on a Coal Committee we should never have had the Reform Bill, and Grey would have gone to Ireland." But by the autumn of 1830, the necessity for the alliance had disappeared, and the Duke

soon put it out of the power of Lord Grey, or any other Whig, to come to his assistance. Parliament met on the 25th of October, and on Tuesday, the 2nd of November, the Duke of Wellington made his ill-timed declaration on Reform, throwing down his gauntlet to the Whig Party, who lost not a moment in taking it up. Mr. Brougham at once gave notice that on the 16th he would bring forward a large scheme for the reform of the representation. As Ministers expected to be beaten on it, they took the opportunity afforded by their defeat on Sir H. Parnell's motion to resign beforehand, thus avoiding the appearance of being turned out on the Reform question, and securing the good-will of the King by falling in defence of his interests. Sir Henry Parnell's motion was for a Select Committee to examine and report on the Civil List. The King was much incensed at the proposal. The Ministers opposed it with all their strength, and, finding themselves in a minority, made it a Cabinet question, and resigned at once.

In the new Ministry, which was immediately formed by Lord Grey, Mr. Stanley became Chief Secretary for Ireland, and his long and fierce struggle with O'Connell began at once. When O'Connell found himself excluded from professional advancement by a Whig Ministry, his indignation knew no bounds. He hastened back to Ireland, and commenced a series of demonstrations, in which he singled out Mr. Stanley for special abuse. Stanley sent him a challenge,* which he refused, on the same ground which he assigned for refusing Mr. Disraeli's, namely, that

* McCullagh Torrens' *Life of Lord Melbourne*, vol. i. p. 357.

he had once killed a man, and proceeded on his course for some weeks unchecked. At last, however, he made a false step, which brought him within the grasp of the law; and he was arrested in Dublin on the 18th of January 1831, for a breach of the Associations' Act. In what followed, it may be doubted whether Stanley was treated with full confidence by his colleagues. After some negotiations with the Irish Law Officers, O'Connell offered to plead guilty to one part of the indictment if the other was withdrawn. The Attorney-General assented, and as matters then stood O'Connell would have been called up for judgment on the first day of Easter Term, which was the 20th of April. When the day arrived O'Connell did not appear, his counsel representing that he was detained by his Parliamentary duties; and the Court agreed to a postponement of the case to an early day in May. This concession was made by Blackburn, the Attorney-General, in complete ignorance of the step on which the Cabinet had already determined.* Three days afterwards, on the 23rd of April, Parliament was dissolved. The statute under which O'Connell was indicted, expired with this Session †; and, as he could not be brought up for judgment afterwards, there was nothing more to be done, and he escaped scot free.

O'Connell's offer, which was accepted by the counsel for the Crown, was made about the middle of February, and as soon as it was known in England public suspicion was aroused. Rumours of a compromise and a compact between O'Connell and the Government began to be heard. Mr. Stanley was

* *Life of Right Hon. Muir Blackburn*, 1874, p. 97.

† *Ib.* p. 67.

questioned in the House of Commons; but in two speeches, one on the 21st and one on the 28th of February, he denied most emphatically that any such understanding existed, and asserted most positively that the law would take its course. "The Crown has procured a verdict against Mr. O'Connell, and it will undoubtedly call him up for judgment." These words were spoken on the 28th of February. On the very next day, Tuesday, March the 1st, the Reform Bill was introduced, and the Government now found they would have need of all their strength. They could not afford to lose the powerful support of O'Connell. His vote in the House was important*; his assistance in debate not less so. More than all, his influence in Ireland, in the event of a General Election, was too valuable to be forfeited; and, whether right or wrong, it was the general belief at the time that his escape from justice was contrived by the Ministers themselves. That Stanley was not privy to the plot till it was too late to prevent it, we may easily believe. But he probably acquiesced in the necessity which prompted it; and he seems to have had no difference with his colleagues on the subject.

The Reform Campaign had now commenced, and for a time O'Connell was forgotten. Stanley spoke on the fourth night of the debate, and based his support of the measure chiefly on the ground that all attempts to amend the representation by more moderate and gradual means had failed. He forgot, however, that those attempts had failed principally because they were introduced by private members, not only without the authority of Government, but without receiving even the official and organized support of the Opposi-

* The second reading was only carried by one.

tion. But the speech shows what he meant when he said, in 1828, that he had always been in favour of Parliamentary reform "to a certain extent." He now said :

I was in hopes that a gradual reform would have been effected in Parliament by selecting, one after another, the most notorious cases of delinquency. If a determined desire to reform by degrees the abuses of the present system had been manifested, then the public would have been satisfied with a less sudden change than that which is now contemplated.

But let the house look back for the last few years, and mark the time, the money, and the talents which have been wasted in discussing useless questions respecting boroughs charged with malpractices; inquiring, for instance, whether one voter received one guinea and another five, when it is as notorious as the sun at noonday that boroughs are commonly bought and sold in the market by the proprietors. And after all this labour, after all this investigation, after all this minute inquiry, what has been gained for the cause of reform? Not one great town, not one great district, has been added to those represented in this House. Not one corrupt borough has been deprived of the means of corruption.

My honourable friend (Sir R. Peel) talked of the advantages to be derived from nomination—he contended that it afforded an opportunity of admitting very clever men into the House, who might not be able to find a seat in any other way. Whatever advantage might be derived from this mode of admission would be more than balanced by this disadvantage, that the class of persons thus introduced would, whatever may be their talents and acquirements, not be looked upon by the people as representatives.

We were told last night that this measure would admit 500,000 persons to the councils of the nation. In my opinion it will do no such thing. It will admit them to the possession of rights which belong to them from their wealth and intelligence, and consequent importance in the political scale. By this means we shall attach them to institutions of the country, and gain more from their affection than we could by keeping them unconnected with, and at a distance from, the benefits of the constitution. But then it is said that the measure is revolutionary. To this it is scarcely necessary that I should urge more in reply than a mere denial of any such object on the part of those who introduced it. Is my noble friend who introduced the measure into this House a man without any stake in the

country? Is not the name which he bears in itself a guarantee against any such intention? Is my noble friend at the head of the Government, who is said to be strenuously attached to the privileges of his order, who has on more than one occasion been made the subject of attack on that ground, likely to advocate a measure which is to involve those privileges and the monarchy in one common ruin? Look round on the other members of His Majesty's Government, and at those who come forward to support them on this occasion—are they men of no fortune, mere adventurers, who would have everything to gain, and nothing to lose, by a revolution? Are they not men who have large stakes in the country, and whose individual interests are bound up with the permanent peace and security of the State. What, then, could they gain by a revolution? They conceive that they cannot more effectually secure the true interests of the country and render its institutions permanent than by basing them on the affections of the people. For my own part, I feel no alarm of the kind for the results of the bill. By that bill the influence of the aristocracy will be upheld—I mean the influence which they ought to possess, not the influence of bribery and corruption, not the influence of direct or indirect nomination.

On this view of the case Greville has an extract from Burke so much to the purpose that I must be allowed the liberty of quoting it. Greville had said in 1829 much what Stanley says here. But in 1835 he had changed his note. "Nobody but Burke," he says, "could have described so well the Dukes of Devonshire and Bedford of our own day, who appear to have lost their senses, and to be ready to peril all their great possessions to gratify the passions of the moment." Burke says :

But riches do not in all cases secure even an inert and passive resistance ; there are always in that description men whose fortunes, when their minds are once vitiated by passion or evil principle, are by no means a security from their actually taking their part against the public tranquillity. We see to what low and despicable passion of all kinds many men in that class are ready to sacrifice the patrimonial estates which might be perpetuated in their families with splendour, and with the fame of hereditary benefactors to mankind from genera-

tion to generation. Do we not see how lightly people treat their fortunes when they are under the passion of gaming? The game of resentment or ambition will be played by many of the great and rich as desperately and with as much blindness to the consequences as any other game. Passion blinds them to the consequences as far as they concern themselves, and as to the consequences with regard to others, they are no part of their consideration.

Stanley, however, was not one of those. He had from the first been reckoned among the less advanced section of the party, those who, in the second year of the struggle, were ripe for a Conservative compromise. For the present, however, he continued to be a keen advocate of the Bill, and a speech which he made against General Gascoigne's motion on the 18th of April, while showing unabated confidence in its merits, derives additional interest from his remarks on the representation of Ireland. General Gascoigne had moved, "That it is the opinion of this House that the total number of knights, citizens, and burgesses returned to Parliament for that part of the United Kingdom called England and Wales ought not to be diminished." Mr. Stanley, speaking of the proportion in which members were allotted to England, said:

For my part, I am not inclined to attach any great importance to the strict maintenance of the present relative proportion between the three countries, and as long as I find large, wealthy, and populous places unrepresented in any of those three countries, I care little whether those places are to be found in England, Scotland, or Ireland. I thank God that this is now an united empire, and I am for meting out the same measure with strict impartiality to all. I caution honourable members who stickle so pertinaciously for the maintenance of the proportion of members between the three countries, and who grudge to Ireland any increase of representatives beyond the number given to her at the time of the Union, to consider well the arguments which they are thus putting into the hands of those who are contending for a measure which I conceive would be mischievous both to

England and Ireland—I mean the repeal of the Union—and who put forward the doctrine that Ireland is not adequately represented in this house, and is therefore entitled to have a domestic legislature of her own.

General Gascoigne's amendment being carried against the Government by a majority of eight on the 19th of April, on the 23rd, as we have seen, Parliament was dissolved, and Stanley's father having been called up to the Lords as Lord Stanley of Bickerstaffe, his son succeeded him in the representation of North Lancashire, a seat which he retained till his own accession to the peerage in 1844.

The general election of 1831 gave the Ministry a large majority. The second Reform Bill was introduced on the 24th of June, and the second reading carried at five o'clock on the morning of the 7th of July by a majority of a hundred and thirty-six. The Bill was in Committee till the 19th of September, when the third reading was carried by a majority of a hundred and six. It was taken up to the Lords on the 22nd, where, after a great debate, the motion for the second reading was defeated on the 8th of October by a hundred and ninety-nine votes to a hundred and fifty-eight, or a majority of forty-one. Lord Lyndhurst expressed the views of all reasonable Conservatives when he said, "they assented to the object, but opposed the principle" of the Bill. The mob, however, were in no humour to listen to such distinctions, and the formidable riots which ensued seem to have frightened both parties, the Tories for very obvious reasons, the Whigs by a foretaste of what they might expect from their protégés. Certain it is that the rejection of the Bill by the House of Lords was immediately followed by negotiations between the two parties, in which Stanley played a prominent part. They seem

to have originated with Lord Palmerston, who suggested to Mr. Wortley, the eldest son of Lord Wharncliffe, that a compromise might be possible. Early in November, Stanley, on his way to Ireland, called, with Lord Grey's consent, at Lord Harrowby's place in Staffordshire to talk the matter over with Harrowby's son, Lord Sandon. They agreed so well that Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe and Mr. Wortley joined Lord Sandon after Stanley's departure, and then was laid the foundation of the long series of proposals and counter proposals which lasted, with little intermission, down to the following May, when all attempt at compromise was finally abandoned.

Parliament was prorogued on the 19th of October, and re-assembled on the 7th of December, when Stanley returned to London. The third Reform Bill was introduced on the 13th, and the second reading was carried at one o'clock on Sunday morning the 18th by a majority of a hundred and sixty-two. In the course of this debate Stanley had his first and only "set to" with Croker, whom the Opposition always relied upon when an historical argument was wanted. On this occasion he came down, as usual, full of Charles the First and his times, endeavouring to show that it was the King's fatal policy of concession in 1640 which brought about his ruin. Stanley's speech, though it pointed out some errors in Croker's contained several of its own, and though the manner of its delivery may have made a great impression at the time, certainly does not deserve all that contemporaries said about it.

Croker had made a very clever speech on Friday, with quotations from Hume, and much reasoning upon them. Hobhouse detected several inaccuracies, and gave his discovery to Stanley, who worked

it up in a crushing attack upon Croker. It is by far the best speech Stanley ever made, and so good as to raise him immeasurably in the House. Lord Grey said it placed him at the very top of the House of Commons, without a rival, which perhaps is jumping to rather too hasty a conclusion

Stanley pointed out that Croker had confounded the Long Parliament with the short Parliament—the Parliament which sat from November 1640 to April 1653, with the Parliament which met on the 13th of April 1640 and lasted only twenty-two days. He also showed that, to draw any fair conclusion, it was necessary to compare the whole period between 1627 and 1640 with the whole period between 1819, when the Reform movement first began, and 1831; and not to limit the comparison, as Croker had done, to the period between 1640 and 1645. Here Stanley was quite right. But he omitted to notice one important difference between the two periods, which invalidates the whole argument. From 1627 to 1640 the Parliament, and presumably the country, were against the Government and in favour of Reform. From 1819 to 1831 the Parliament, and presumably the country, were against Reform and in favour of the Government. Three general elections, numerous divisions in the House of Commons, and the testimony of the Whig leaders themselves, prove this. Nor was it because the people could not make themselves heard that they seemed to acquiesce in a system which they in reality condemned. If this had been the case, how do we account for the Reform majority in 1831? They could make themselves heard when they chose, as they did in 1784. Down to 1832 they did not choose. If the people were not discontented with the existing system, certainly the

Government were under no obligation to reform it. Stanley argued in the second place that the sweeping measure of 1831 was due exclusively to the policy of the Tories, who had rejected every proposal for more moderate Reform that had been made during the last twelve years. The plea, however, though plausible was nothing more. It does, of course, often happen that the rejection of moderate measures necessitates the introduction of sweeping ones; but not invariably—nor was it so in 1831. Nobody expected such a measure as Lord John Russell unfolded; and while by Stanley's argument we are required to believe that had a smaller measure been proposed by Lord Grey in 1831 it would not have been accepted, he himself in this very same speech confesses that it would!

The truth is that Stanley on his legs in the House of Commons, fired by Party spirit, and full of the *gaudium certaminis*, was a different man from Stanley discussing the matter quietly with a few cool-headed friends. In spite of his vehement oratory in Parliament, he continued to be regarded as the man on whom the middle party—sometimes harshly called “the Waverers”—pinned their hopes. “All depends on him,” says Greville, in his diary of January 24th, 1832. The moderate party in the Cabinet at this time consisted of the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Duke of Richmond, Lord Palmerston, Lord Melbourne, and Mr. Stanley. Of these, however, Stanley was by far the most influential, and if he only stood firm the Moderates seemed to care very little what happened to the rest. The points on which he was required to stand firm were, first, the terms of the compromise which was now in process of arrangement, and, secondly,

the resistance which it was determined to offer to the proposed creation of peers. On these questions he was supposed to be at one with the more conciliatory members of the Opposition, and we must bear this in mind when we come to the story of Brookes' supper table.

Parliament reassembled on the 17th of January, and on the 20th the House went into Committee on the third Reform Bill. It was read a third time by a majority of a hundred and sixteen on the 23rd of March, was taken up to the Lords on the 26th, and the second reading was appointed for Monday, the 9th of April. It was carried, against the advice both of the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, by a majority of nine on the 13th, and was taken in Committee on the 7th of May. Before this date an understanding had very nearly been arrived at between the Government and the Moderates, which would have materially improved the Bill, and which was only thrown over by the unfortunate precipitation of the ultra Tories. On the nature of the concessions which the Government, pressed hard by the Stanley party in the Cabinet, were prepared to make, our best authority is Lord Grey himself. On the 13th of February he told Sir Herbert Taylor, and on the 16th of April he told the King, that there were three provisions in the Bill which he considered fundamental—Schedule A, the enfranchisement of the large towns, and the ten-pound borough franchise. “With respect to any other alteration he would make large concessions.” And it afterwards appeared that in regard to the enfranchisement of the large towns he did not consider himself bound by any hard and fast lines. Now, what were the “other alterations” demanded by the moderate

Tories and supported by Mr. Stanley and his friends? The two most important of them were, viz. that no man voting for a borough in right of a ten-pound house should also have a vote for the county in right of any borough freehold; and, secondly, that the proposed number of Metropolitan districts should be limited. In addition to the evidence afforded by Lord Grey himself,* we have the statement of his son-in-law to Greville—that on these two points the Government were prepared to give way.† We may suppose that Mr. Stanley attached great importance to this amendment affecting the borough freeholders, as he introduced it into his own Reform Bill of 1859, and it was, in fact, mainly on this one provision that the measure was defeated. Yet Lord John Russell, who led the attack on it, spoke in the name of a party who had been ready to do the same thing in 1832.

So matters stood when the Bill went into Committee on the 7th of May. No final understanding had yet been arrived at. But the Government were led to believe that no hostile action would be taken by the Opposition until it was. Much to the surprise and indignation of Lord Grey, therefore, and in spite of the remonstrances of Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, Lord Lyndhurst met the motion for going into Committee with the proposal that the enfranchising clauses should be considered before the disfranchising. This amendment struck at the essential principle of the Bill. Parliamentary Reform in 1831-2 was no longer demanded only for the enfranchisement of large towns, but much more for the disfranchisement of small ones, and the destruction to that extent of the power of the

* *Correspondence of William the Fourth and Earl Grey*. Edited by Henry Earl Grey. 1867.

† *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 276.

aristocracy. The Government, therefore, could not think of accepting it, and on its being carried by a majority of thirty-five, and on the King's refusal to create the necessary number of peers to reverse this decision, Lord Grey resigned, and the May negotiations followed.

This "untoward event," of course, put an end to all further communications between the Government and the Opposition, and the compromise so nearly consummated was at once knocked upon the head. We can easily believe that nobody was more vexed at the result than Mr. Stanley himself; and as the Moderates, finding they could not prevent Lord Lyndhurst from going on with his amendment, actually consented to vote for it, Stanley very likely thought himself betrayed by them. Under the influence of these combined feelings, the speech at Brookes' is intelligible enough. His bristles were up, and for the moment he was the unbridled partisan. Sir Denis Le Marchant, in his *Life of Lord Althorpe*, says it would be hardly fair to record some of the expressions which he used in the warmth of the moment. The only fragment of this celebrated oration which I have been able to recover is as follows:—"The Duke of Wellington is a fool—and he is no fool—if he thinks he can carry on the Government without a Reform Bill. If he brings in a Reform Bill, let us support it and leave to him the profit and the infamy of success." Hence it got abroad that young Stanley had called the Duke of Wellington a fool.

His part in the great reform drama was now, however, played. After a week of negotiations, combinations, and disruptions, in which the timidity of some,

the jealousy of others, and the blind frenzy of more, prevented the trial of an experiment which would, at all events, have enriched our constitutional history with another very interesting chapter, the Duke of Wellington gave up the attempt to form a Ministry, the Whigs returned to power, and the Reform Bill became law. On the 19th of January 1832, Mr. Stanley introduced the Irish Reform Bill. But the circumstances of the Irish representation were so different from those of England that comparatively little interest was excited by it; and the principal historian of the period, Mr. Spencer Walpole, passes it by without a word.

The story of Brookes' supper-table, and the strong party speeches on Reform which Stanley made in the House of Commons have led to a general impression that the passage of the Reform Bill was in great part due to his exertions. This was Mr. Disraeli's opinion in 1874. That he played a very important part in it is true. But Stanley was from the first an aristocratic Whig, who, while fighting the battles of his party with loyalty and energy, scarcely disguised his preference for less sweeping changes than those which he was called on to defend. If we compare his speeches on Reform with his speeches on Ireland or on slavery, we shall see a marked difference between them in solid strength and genuine fervour. His Reform speeches are fine displays of Parliamentary swordsmanship; but they are not marked either by the satire, the logic, or the lofty declamatory eloquence which signalised his encounters with O'Connell. It is necessary to bear this in mind when confronted with his subsequent career. He was not much afraid of the Reform Bill; or he was more

afraid of popular tumults. Perhaps to him, as to Godolphin, the nearer danger always seemed the worse. But that he was never an enthusiastic reformer, and that he would have been heartily glad if matters had been so managed as to permit of the question being settled on much more moderate conditions, we think may safely be asserted. It is also to be noted that Stanley was not one of those statesmen who looked forward with eagerness to a long series of popular measures to be achieved by a reformed Parliament. As far as he desired reform at all, he desired it for its own sake. Scarcely had it begun to bear its natural fruits than Stanley broke away from his party. His advocacy of the Reform Bill was perfectly honest; but it was certainly deficient in prescience. Both Lord John Russell on the one side and the Duke of Wellington on the other saw farther ahead than he did.

CHAPTER III.

IRISH AND COLONIAL AFFAIRS.

1831-1834.

The Education Act—The Tithe Resolutions—The three Bills—Mr. Littleton's Bill—Mr. Stanley and the Irish members—The Peace Preservation Bill—Its progress in the House of Commons—Stanley to the rescue—The Church Temporalities Bill—Stanley's speech—His transference to the Colonial Office—The Slavery resolutions—Mr. Ward's motion—Stanley's resignation.

IN order to present a consecutive view of Mr. Stanley's Parliamentary career, it is now necessary to recur to the Session of 1831. We have done with Reform for the present, and may now glance at the achievements of the Chief Secretary for Ireland more exclusively in his own department. The principal Irish measures with which his name is associated are the Irish Education Act, the Tithes Act, the Suppression of Disturbances, commonly called the Coercion Act, and the Church Temporalities Act. The measure which he introduced in 1831, for the better administration of the Government grant hitherto allotted to the Kildare Street Society, seems to be allowed by friend and foe to have worked the happiest results. The plan, however, was merely the embodiment of recommendations made by the Select Committee of 1827, and

constituted a Board of National Education in Dublin, by which a system was established resembling, in many respects, the English Education Act of 1870, as contemplated by its author, Mr. Forster. The essence of it was the admission of Roman Catholic children to the benefits of the Government grant, by the opening of schools in which a common secular education should be combined with separate religious instruction for those who wished it. This was Stanley's original idea; but it was represented to him by some member of the new Board that it would not do to exclude religious instruction altogether, even from the common education; and accordingly three Books were compiled, one by the Roman Catholic Archbishop Murray, another by the Anglo-Catholic Archbishop Whately, and a third, of whose author I am ignorant, to be read in the schools by children of all denominations whose parents did not object to them. The compromise, though hotly disputed in the House of Commons by the same party which afterwards objected to Sir Robert Peel's "godless colleges," became law before the Session was over; and shows that Mr. Stanley steered a middle course in his own mind between those who contend that the State should have no religion and those who argue that it is bound to discountenance, by every means short of persecution, all religions but one. It is a convenient position for a statesman in a country like England. It has the eminent merit, in an Englishman's eyes, of being "practical." The argument from this point of view is irresistible. English opinion would not have tolerated the payment of Roman Catholic schools. Irish children would not have attended Anglican schools, therefore the compromise

was the only thing possible if Ireland was to be educated at all. The question, however, does not end here. If one Church represents religious truth, those which differ from it must represent religious error. And though we can understand that the State, under such circumstances, should abstain from persecuting error, churchmen will doubt if one should actively encourage and assist it.*

In December 1831 a committee was appointed to inquire into the question of Irish Tithe, of which Mr. Stanley was chairman; and the evidence disclosed such a shocking state of distress among the clergy, that Stanley determined on introducing some temporary measure of relief before the inquiry was concluded. Accordingly, on the 8th of March 1832, he proposed three resolutions to the House, which were ultimately agreed to, the first merely reciting the fact of this distress existing; the second authorising the Government to make advances to such Irish clergymen as were reduced to destitution through the loss of their incomes; and the third empowering the State to reimburse itself by levying on defaulters for all arrears due from January 1831. These resolutions were embodied in a Bill read a third time on the 4th of April, and were avowedly only a stop gap till Government should have time to introduce a comprehensive measure. But both the Resolutions and the Bill were contested tooth and nail by the Irish Roman Catholics, led by Sheil and O'Connell, and both Stanley himself and the Government in general were made the objects of such violent attacks that Stanley

* A full account of the Kildare Street Society, and of the fortunes of Irish education under Lord Stanley's Act is to be found in the *Life of Lord Chancellor Blackburne*

was provoked into hitting out rather freely ; and he went so far as to remind the Irish members that the Reform Bill was not passed yet, and that such sentiments as they expressed towards the Established Church were not calculated to make Parliament look more favourably on the claims of Ireland to an enlarged representation. Stanley was thought to have made a mistake by holding out what seemed to be a threat over the heads of the Irish members. But it mattered very little. The Roman Catholic Party, enraged at any recognition of the Church's proprietary rights, could neither have been mollified by a more conciliatory attitude nor exasperated by a still more defiant one. This debate was remarkable for the first hint of the Appropriation question, destined to be the ruin of the Ministry. The Government were asked what would be done with any funds in the hands of the Tithe Commissioners over and above the amount required for repayment of advances. The Irish Secretary of course replied that they would be appropriated to ecclesiastical uses ; but what is more, the question drew from Lord Althorpe an apparently voluntary statement that neither would he himself consent to their alienation, which makes what followed all the more remarkable.

A temporary remedy having thus been applied to the disease, and the full reports of the two Tithe Committees, the Lords and Commons, having now been published, Stanley on the 5th of July asked leave to bring in three Bills to carry out their recommendation, and to effect, as he hoped, a permanent settlement of the question. The first Bill was to make composition for tithes compulsory ; the second, to establish ecclesiastical corporations with power to hold

land in Irish dioceses; the third, to enable the tithe owner to sell, and the ecclesiastical corporation to buy, the tithes. The conception was excellent, and would have placed the property of the Church on a much more secure foundation than it continued to rest upon. But the Irish Roman Catholics and the English Radicals combined against it; and Stanley was only able to carry the first Bill before Parliament was adjourned.

Late in the following session, however, another Bill was brought in by Mr. Littleton, who, owing to circumstances presently to be mentioned, had succeeded Stanley as Irish Secretary, which patched up the question for the time. In 1833 the tithes in arrear amounted in round numbers to £1,200,000. The Bill authorised the Ministry to advance £1,000,000 to the clergy on the security of these arrears, which the Government was to collect. The money was advanced, but the arrears were never collected by the Government, and what ultimately became of them I do not know. And on this footing, in spite of attempts at a more complicated measure in the following year, the Irish Tithe system remained till 1838, when it was converted into a rent charge.

One would have thought it was almost impossible to widen the breach between Stanley and the Irish Party. His speeches on the Tithe question had contained passages both contemptuous and menacing which it was impossible they should forgive. But in canvassing North Lancashire in November he threw salt upon the wound, and inflamed the wrath of the Repealers to fever heat by declaring that he "considered the repeal of the Legislative union between the two countries to be equivalent to the dismemberment and destruction of the empire, and that he would, if need

were, resist it to the death.” The words were eagerly caught up and distorted by the O’Connellites, who declared that the Irish Secretary had proclaimed war to the knife against Ireland, and that he was about to advise the Sovereign that the Repeal movement must be crushed by force. But their cup was not full even yet.

He now appeared before them in Parliament with two great measures of his own—the Peace Preservation Act and the Irish Church Temporalities Act, one of which they declared to be a piece of bloody and brutal tyranny and the other a mockery and an insult. O’Connell was quite determined that neither the relief afforded to the Roman Catholic tenantry by Stanley’s measures nor the Irish Reform Bill, by which the forty-shilling freehold franchise abolished in 1829 was not restored, should pacify Ireland; and accordingly, all through the winter of 1832–3 crime and outrage continued to rage worse than ever. Lord Grey determined that the first use he would make of his majority in the reformed Parliament should be to put a stop to this monstrous state of things by a sharp and summary process. On the 15th of February the Prime Minister himself introduced a Bill for that purpose into the House of Lords. On the 22nd it was read a third time and passed. On the same day Stanley declared in the House of Commons that the Government staked their existence on the Bill; and on the following Wednesday, after another emphatic assurance from the Chief Secretary that Government would make the Bill a Cabinet question, the debate began. The leading points in the Bill were these. The Lord Lieutenant was to be at liberty to suppress all meetings; he was to be empowered to declare any county to be in a state of disturbance; and in a dis-

turbed district it was to be penal to be out of doors between sunset and sunrise. Offenders in disturbed districts were to be tried by court-martial. The courts were to consist of not less than five and not more than nine officers. No officer under twenty-one years of age, or of less than two years' standing, was to serve upon them. They were to have the assistance of a King's council or serjeant. They were not, without the express authority of the Lord Lieutenant, to try any offence to which the penalty of death was annexed, or to inflict a severer sentence than transportation.

Lord Althorpe in the Cabinet, and many English Liberals outside of it, disapproved of both measures—both the Coercion Bill and the Church Bill—the one as being too strong, the other not strong enough; and the knowledge of this fact lent new courage to Stanley's assailants. Althorpe wanted to resign. But Lord Grey declared, as he did on a subsequent occasion, that Althorpe's resignation would be followed by his own. Stanley, of course, stood stoutly to his guns, and Lord Althorpe consented to remain, seeing clearly enough that the resignation of himself and Lord Grey at that particular moment, and on that particular question, would simply leave Stanley master of the situation, and might possibly end in making the Church Bill more conservative and the Coercion Bill more severe than they were already.

The conduct of the Bill was formally entrusted to Lord Althorpe, but in reality rested upon Stanley, but for whose superb speech on the first night of the debate it would probably have been wrecked upon the threshold. Lord Althorpe acquitted himself so very poorly in his opening speech that several Liberal members who were secretly hostile to the Bill began

to take liberties with it, and declared that the Government had made out no case. Things were going as badly as possible when Stanley, who had watched the temper of the House from the Treasury Bench, snatched up a bundle of papers from the table and walked out of the House with them. In two hours he came back, completely master of the whole subject and of all the newest evidence. He then rose on the first opportunity and delivered a speech which did indeed place him at the top of the tree, far over the head of any living orator, and caused Abercromby to say to Sir Denis le Marchant, "Had it been the old House, I should have quietly walked home and put on my nightcap, under the conviction that Stanley in a few weeks would be Prime Minister, and remain so as long as he pleased, governing us on Tory principles, for the whole speech was in that spirit." Stanley, in fact, was on his mettle; and he was answering more than the speeches of that night. He was liberating his mind on a large scale, and repaying his enemies for the abuse they had heaped upon him at an earlier period of the session, and during great part of the recess. From this celebrated oration I have selected a few passages which are either of general and permanent interest, or which illustrate the orator's style in his graver and more impassioned moments.

The hon. member for the City of London had stated that this measure was divisible into two separate and distinct parts, and that however willing he might be to support that part of it which would go to give stronger powers to the Government for the purpose of putting down predial agitation, nothing would induce him to support that part of it which was calculated to control the political liberty of the subject. Now with every desire to promote, rather than control, the liberty of the subject, he would ask whether Ireland was in such a state at present that the liberty of the subject—that the power to give free expression to political opinions and political sentiments, at

all existed there? If it were a fact, as it undoubtedly was, that political liberty did not exist in Ireland—that the free expression of public opinion did not exist there—that men could not give utterance to their opinions in that country without exposing their lives and properties to peril—if that were the case (and could it be denied that it was) this measure, instead of controlling political liberty, went to extinguish political domination. Was it possible that the free expression and free discussion of opinion could exist in Ireland under the tyranny of a society, one of the many that had been founded by hon. and learned gentlemen, which altogether controlled the public voice—which put under its ban any man who dared to differ from its decisions—which, in short, endeavoured “to wield the fierce democracy” of Ireland, and which had so contrived to usurp to itself all the forms of the Government that it seemed made, not to preserve the liberty, but to rivet for ever the political slavery of that country.

No man could hold up to public odium and contempt all the constituted authorities for the administration of the law, and then put his hand to his heart and say he was not to lay at his door any of the resistance made to those constituted authorities.

He then went through a great mass of evidence to prove his case, and concluded as follows:—

The letter to which he alluded went on to state—“You will see in the papers the list of those who fought for Ireland. You will, I am sure, be glad to see the member for Dundalk in the number. Young Talbot, of Athlone, voted in both the majorities. Learn at once what the honest men of Athlone think of this desertion of his country. The two members for the county of Limerick voted also in the majorities against Ireland. Is there no honest spirit remaining in that country to call upon the gallant Colonels to retrace their steps?” He would now put it to the hon. and learned member for Dublin whether he meant to admit this direct and palpable interference with the votes and decisions of that House. [Mr. O’Connell: “I do certainly.” Mr. Stanley proceeded:] Then he would put it to the House, in the abused and prostituted name of national liberty, whether any more flagrant violation of freedom of speech and freedom of thought ever came before it? Did any noisy spouter about popular rights, any frothy declaimer about popular liberty, ever put forward so flimsy a veil as that with which it was endeavouring to hide a most tyrannical interference of an illegitimate and unconstitutional power over the votes of Parliament? Could there be anything more outrageous than such an appeal—an appeal not to the constituency of hon. members—an appeal not to those to whom alone they were

responsible for their votes—but to a self-constituted volunteer association, which was to spread its mighty arms over the whole of Ireland, bringing all within its grasp, and subjecting everything to its uncontrolled dominion? He had now stated the case at length, but he trusted not more at length than the necessity of the case justified. He had distinctly separated the predial from the political agitation—the outrages upon life and property from those upon civil and constitutional liberty—which were a necessary consequence of the system which existed there. He now called upon them in the name of liberty—as they valued constitutional rights and legal privileges—as they wished to see property, nay, life itself, secure—as they wished to protect honest and peaceable subjects against a system of violence and predial outrage—as they wished to exercise fully and freely their ever undoubted rights—at once to denounce this vile attempt to destroy, under the mask of liberty, every germ of an unbiassed and independent public opinion. He called upon them by their vote that night to sanction the declaration, that they would rather infringe for a time upon the laws, than suffer all liberty, all law, all constitutional rights, all security for life and property to be absorbed—as it must be, unless Parliament interfered—in one wide gulf of ruin and tyranny.

O'Connell made no attempt to answer this speech, of which the above extracts necessarily convey only a very imperfect idea. He actually condescended to apologise and explain. The first reading of the Bill was carried on the 5th of March by the immense majority of three hundred and seventy-seven, and a second time on the 12th by a majority of two hundred and seventy-nine. It emerged from Committee on the 27th of March, and was read a third time on the 29th. It may be stated, in the most direct and positive terms, that but for Stanley's commanding intellectual superiority, complete knowledge of the subject, and unrivalled readiness in reply, which together bore down all before them, the Bill would never have become law. His "daring determination," whether it carried the Reform Bill or not, certainly saved

Ireland. Stanley, in fact, had taken the Irish party by the beard, and they already hated him with a hatred which his speeches on the Coercion Bill and the Peace Preservation Bill could scarcely exasperate.

The Church Temporalities Bill was proceeded with simultaneously with the Coercion Bill. It provided for the extinction of ten out of the twenty-two Irish bishoprics, and it laid a tax, saving existing incumbencies, on all benefices exceeding £200 a year, ranging from five to fifteen per cent. The saving effected by the reduction of Sees would go to the augmentation of smaller benefices. The new tax would be a substitute for church rates. But though it was Stanley's measure, he was not placed in the front of the battle as he had been on the last-named Bill. To have placed him there would have been dangerous, and was besides unnecessary. The Irish, of course, detested him, and, as Lord Grey thought, the English Liberals were jealous of him. Besides, the Coercion Bill was comparatively a simple issue, and required only to be pushed forward with unflinching resolution and dauntless courage by a Minister who knew his own mind, and could be trusted not to hesitate or falter. With the Church Bill the case was different. It was a much more complicated measure, involving rights of property and questions of conscience, intersected by delicate distinctions, and requiring to be handled throughout in a spirit of conciliation and compromise. Stanley hardly had the patience for work of this description, and perhaps his very decided opinions on ecclesiastical questions hardly made him the fittest person to arbitrate between the two parties. At the same time, when the Bill was introduced by Lord Althorpe on the 12th of February, he could not help

expressing his regret that the introduction of it had not devolved upon another.

Speaking on May 6, Stanley acknowledged the Bill to be his own work, and said "he adhered to what he had formerly asserted, that it was not desirable that the property of the Church should be devoted to other than ecclesiastical purposes." It is a mistake, therefore, to suppose that in the Bill as introduced by Lord Althorpe there was anything which Stanley himself would have called an "Appropriation Clause" in the offensive sense of the term. The 147th clause proposed that the increased value of ecclesiastical property, consequent on repealing the Act of Charles the Second, and restoring to the bishops the power of granting leases in perpetuity, might be applied to secular purposes. The tenant, of course, would pay more for the renewal of his lease in perpetuity than for the renewal of it for twenty-one years; and the difference between the two sums was the increment in dispute. Stanley denied that this could, strictly, be called Church property. Peel asserted that it could, and, as it seems to me, had the best of the argument. But the real question between them was as to the nature of this additional value, not as to the alienation of property which confessedly belonged to the Church. This question was to come, and to this species of appropriation Stanley was as much opposed as ever. It has sometimes been said that the clause was withdrawn in Committee to please him. But this was not the case at all. He proposed its withdrawal himself to conciliate the Opposition, remarking at the same time that the sum in question would ultimately prove so small that it was not worth quarrelling about.

However, in Irish affairs his colleagues might well think that Stanley had done his work. He had passed the Education Act, the Tithes Act, and the Coercion Act in the teeth of a strong opposition and the most violent abuse. He had borne the burden and heat of the day, and had got the Ministry through their principal difficulties. His place might now be taken by one who recalled less irritating reminiscences. Accordingly, on the 28th of March he was transferred to the Colonial Office, and was succeeded by Sir John Hobhouse, who, failing to be re-elected for Westminster, made way for Mr. Littleton, the late Lord Hatherton, so curiously implicated in the downfall of Lord Grey's Ministry.

Stanley now had another heavy piece of work cut out for him in the shape of the Abolition of Slavery, which was the next great work of the Whig Government. It was on the 14th of May that he introduced his resolutions on the subject. But they satisfied neither the saints nor the slave-owners, of whom the former objected to a twelve years' apprenticeship, and the latter to the smallness of the compensation. Stanley reduced the period of apprenticeship to seven years, and increased the compensation from fifteen millions to twenty millions—a free gift. Thus both parties were secured, and the Bill made rapid progress. It was read a third time on the 22nd of July, was nine days in Committee, and read a third time on the 7th of August, passed rapidly through the House of Lords, and was read a third time on the 20th. It is unnecessary to follow in any detail the progress of a measure to the principle of which all parties were committed. It is sufficient to say that, in carrying it through

Committee, Stanley displayed those remarkable talents for business which were afterwards so usefully employed in the cotton famine, and showed that, beneath all the fire and impetuosity of the born orator, lay the calculating powers of his native Lancashire.

Parliament was prorogued on the 29th of August, and the Ministry seemed outwardly as strong as ever. It had surmounted the difficulties of the session with great success, mainly owing to the exertions of Mr. Stanley, and, besides the Coercion Bill, had passed two contested measures of first-class magnitude and importance in the Church Temporalities Act and the Abolition of Slavery Act. But it was no secret that there were still two parties in the Cabinet, as there had been during the passage of the Reform Bill—the Conservative Whigs and the advanced Liberals—and that on the Irish Church Bill the latter had given way to the former. The English Radicals submitted very sullenly to what they were unable to prevent, but, knowing that they had a friend in the garrison, resolved to try their fortune again in the session of 1834. Their object was to extort from the Government an acknowledgment of the principle that Church property might be diverted to secular uses; and they succeeded. But it was at the cost of breaking up the Ministry, of driving the ablest members of it into the enemies' camp, and of so strengthening the Conservative party that, with one or two exceptions, the country may be said to have been governed on Conservative principles for another generation. It may safely be said, I think, that from 1835 to 1868 there was not a single House of Commons which would have passed Mr. Gladstone's Irish Church Bill, or have sanctioned the alienation of Church property in any form what-

ever. The first intimation of the coming storm was afforded by Lord John Russell himself on the 6th of May, who, in speaking on Mr. Littleton's Tithe Bill, announced himself to be in favour of the obnoxious principle. It was on this occasion that Mr. Stanley—now, by his grandfather's death, become Lord Stanley—whispered to his next-door neighbour that "Johnny had upset the coach." Then came the motion of which notice had been given by Mr. Ward, the member for St. Alban's, declaring that the revenues of the Irish Church were more than she required, and ought to be reduced and redistributed. This motion threw the Government into a great difficulty, from which they endeavoured to escape by appointing a Commission to inquire into the revenue and population of the Irish Church; and this determination seems to have been arrived at by the Cabinet only on the afternoon of the day—May 27th—when Ward's motion was to come on. Stanley, on finding that the Government were ready to concede the principle of secularisation, tendered his resignation on the spot; but, before anything could be settled, Lord Althorpe was obliged to leave the Council and go down to the House of Commons. Shortly afterwards Stanley had an interview with the King, who agreed to accept his resignation if Lord Grey could make other arrangements. Lord Stanley hurried down to the House of Lords, arranged with Lord Grey to resign, and then sent on word to Lord Althorpe, who received his message on the Treasury Bench while Mr. Ward was speaking.

CHAPTER IV.

STANLEY AS AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER.

1834-1835.

Stanley's severance from the Whigs—His position and reputation—The "thimble-rig" speech—His indiscretions—The Bill for admitting Dissenters to the Universities—The winter of 1834—Elected Lord Rector of Glasgow—The "Derby Dilly"—Speech on Lord John Russell's Irish Church resolutions—He goes over to the Conservatives—Lord Palmerston's opinion—Impossibility of constructing a third party.

So went away Stanley from the Whigs, on whom, as a party, for the rest of his life his hand lay very heavy. He no doubt honestly believed to the last that they had been false to their own principles, and would have dragged him down with them into the arms of Democracy. As I have already said, he did not foresee the natural consequences of the Reform Bill, to which, if we may judge from his celebrated reply to Lord Ebrington's address, Lord Grey was almost equally blind. The address entreating him not to retire from his place was signed by a large number of his supporters in the Lower House; and in replying to it he used these words:—"In pursuing a

course of salutary improvement, I feel it indispensable that we shall be allowed to proceed with deliberation and caution, and, above all, that we should not be urged by *a constant and active pressure from without* to the adoption of any measures the necessity of which has not been fully proved, and which are not strictly regulated by a careful attention to the settled institutions of the country both in Church and State." Lord Grey does not seem to have seen how deeply the power of resistance had been affected by his own great measure, and that no Whig Government would be able in the long run to dispense with the support of the Radicals, who represented that pressure from without which he here deprecates. But if he did not see it then, he must have seen it soon; and if he had not resigned in the following July, it is impossible he could have continued much longer at the head of a Ministry to whom the votes of such men as Hume, Cobbett, Hunt, Ward, Grote, and O'Connell were vitally necessary. Stanley, who had also expected, with a want of prescience which to Greville seemed inexplicable, that the old machinery for supporting the authority of Government could be withdrawn without the stability of the edifice being seriously impaired, as soon as he discovered his mistake took the only course consistent with the opinions which he had always held, and resolved to do all that in him lay to strengthen that party in the State which, as it could be counted on to offer a united resistance to "the pressure from without," might also perhaps offer a successful one.

He had been bred up in that political school which held that the Whig Party were the appointed guardians of the Constitution. The Constitution, in his eyes,

involved the maintenance of the Church of England and Ireland in unimpaired integrity. The Church was one of its vital organs. But it said nothing about rotten boroughs. Parliaments were to meet every year and be renewed every seven years. But on the method of election the Constitution was silent. The nomination system might be a means to certain ends which the Constitution did prescribe. But if it seemed possible to secure those ends by other means, or if the means went beyond what was necessary, and did more than the Constitution required, no Whig was bound by his principles or his traditions not to interfere with them. Thus it is easy to see why Stanley, who recoiled from the uses to which a Reformed Parliament was being applied, should not have recoiled from parliamentary reform itself. That so clever a man did not foresee the consequences is but one instance out of many that may be found within the present century, of the singular inaccessibility to deductive or inferential reasoning which characterises English statesmen when actually engaged in legislation. Their motto always seems to be, "Put the present difficulty out of the way, and let the future take care of itself."

But Stanley had other reasons for objecting to the alienation of Church property. He was a sincerely religious man, and he believed the Anglican Church to be the depository of divine truth. This truth had been formally recognized by the State, and constituted the State religion. The Church existed in Ireland for the sake of propagating this religion. To make her capacity for doing so dependent upon fluctuating local majorities, seemed to Stanley not only dangerous and unstatesmanlike but illogical. "This doctrine of

proportion," he said, "is pregnant with danger as applied to Ireland; and, if once admitted, is certain to be applied to England. If you once admit the doctrine that the majority in every parish is the religion of the State, you acknowledge at once that the State has no religion."

His resignation was regarded at the time as a heavy blow to the Whig Ministry; and so it was, for he occupied a higher place in the estimation of his then contemporaries than he will do, perhaps, in that of posterity. His superiority was essentially parliamentary. Though an able practical legislator and a clear-headed, skilful man of business, there were men of his own standing who were his equals in these respects. But on the floor of the House of Commons he had no rival; and those who rated him so highly were either the actual witnesses of his brilliant parliamentary triumphs, or those who heard of them from others fresh from the scene of action and still under "the spell of the magician." They, of course, could hardly exaggerate the extent of the loss which the Government had sustained by his defection, possessing, as he did, just the qualities which they most wanted—a great orator, a superlative debater, and with all the wit, courage, and force of character necessary for coping with such antagonists as O'Connell and Shiel. In fact, he was the only man in the Cabinet equal to the effort; and we have only to place the first Reform Government alongside of the second to see all that Stanley was to it. "They shall know the difference now that I have left them," he might have said to himself.

Yet his loss, after all, was not, perhaps, an unmitigated calamity to the Whig Government. Stanley

had made himself a host of enemies, not more perhaps by the fearless eloquence with which he tore to pieces the case of the Repealers than by the air which he possessed in common with Beauclerk, and which Johnson called the air of being above his company, which irritated one part of the House of Commons as much as his severity did the other. The new Radical members thought it aristocratic insolence, and reproached him for his haughtiness. Many years afterwards they brought the same charge against Lord Palmerston, who was hated at one time by all that section quite as much as Lord Stanley ever was. In neither man, however, was there anything like studied or premeditated insolence. It was not that. But both were men of rank and fashion, moving in a world of which the middle classes knew little—a world which has a language of its own and manners of its own, strange to those who hear and see them for the first time. Neither Lord Palmerston nor Lord Derby were sufficiently careful, perhaps, to remember this ; and, in addressing the House of Commons, forgot sometimes that they were not at White's or at Newmarket, and that if they did not pick their phrases and school their countenances they might be cruelly misconstrued.

Lord Derby, in particular, did himself and his party infinite mischief by the "heedless rhetoric" into which he was betrayed in the excitement of the moment, and the effect of which upon the public he had never calculated. His grandfather, the old Lord Derby, according to Greville was aware of this, and other failings in the young orator, and was always doubtful of his success. He was fond of taking his metaphors from the turf and the hunting field, forgetting that all the world were not bound to appreciate

them ; while his slight and graceful figure, his handsome, high-bred features, and the fighting blue eye, now sparkling with a wicked jest, now kindling with indignant scorn, no doubt did very often seem to the middle-class members who made up the Liberal majority the very type and embodiment of that careless aristocratic arrogance which they had been brought up to hate. When, in the debate on Littleton's Tithe Bill, May 6th, Stanley put his legs on the table, he gave mortal offence to the respectabilities, whereas in the unreformed Parliament nobody would probably have noticed it.

When free from the very slight restraints which office had ever imposed on him, he gave the rein still more freely to his satirical propensities, and turned upon his former colleagues with a sudden ferocity which, however, said Lord Althorpe, was exactly what he should have expected from him. He had always said that he was meant by nature for an Opposition orator, and now he was in his proper place. On the 4th of July, on Littleton's amended Tithe Bill, he made his famous thimble-rig speech :—

If the House did not think he was descending too low, he would say that he had never witnessed anything like the principle on which the Government were proceeding in this instance except among a class of persons not generally received into society, but who were commonly to be met with on race-courses and at country fairs, the instruments of whose calling were a small deal table and four or five thimbles. The skill of these persons was shown by a dexterous shifting of a pea, placing it first under one thimble then under another, and calling on the bystanders to bet which thimble it was under ; the deluded individuals who speculated on the manœuvres of the juggler being sure in the end to have their property taken from them, by means which they could not comprehend. So would it be in the present instance. The illustration was a low one, but he thought the House would agree with him in saying that the self-same

principle was observable in the tricks of the juggler, and in the plan which his right hon. friend and His Majesty's ministers were now following. His right hon. friend had got the pocket of the Church, the pocket of the State, the pocket of the landlord, the pocket of the tenant, the Perpetuity Fund, and the Consolidated Fund, under his various thimbles, and these he shifted about from one thimble to another as he thought fit; at the same time that he called upon them to say under which of the thimbles they were to be found, and kept exclaiming, "We have them under this thimble; oh, no! but they must be under that"; and as all the thimbles were taken up, it would be found that the property had altogether disappeared, and the dupes would be laughed at.

This speech, if we are to believe Greville, lowered him very much in the estimation both of the House of Commons and the public. But Greville blows hot and cold, and it is very difficult to distil from all his scattered entries the real essence of his opinion on any individual. For instance, on July 25th, 1833, he says: "Then it is no small aggravation of the present state of things that Stanley does not seem to be a man of much moral political firmness and courage, a timid politician *ignavus adversum lupos*. He is bold and spirited against individuals, but timid against bodies and with respect to results." In other words, he was a fearless soldier, but a timid general; and I myself have heard the same character of him from Lord Beaconsfield. But on the 13th of the following November he "is the greatest orator and statesman of the day"; and then, six months afterwards, he sinks down again below Peel. Greville is at the mercy of the last incident; and hardly any single statement that "The Gruncher"* makes about anyone can be accepted in its integrity.

On the aforesaid 13th of November Greville dined with him, and Stanley gave him a commission to

* Greville's nickname.

back Bentley against Berbuster for the Derby at an even hundred. He talked about racing, after dinner, Greville adds, with as much zest as if he was on the turf. So he did, at other times, about shooting, with as much zest as if he had been a Scrope or a Hawker, and cared for nothing else in the world. It was this manysidedness of Stanley which made people charge him with want of earnestness—a charge that was entirely unfounded. But he belonged to an age and to a class when and with whom it was not thought necessary that a great statesman should be completely engrossed by politics to the exclusion of every other interest. It is likely enough that in Lords Palmerston and Derby we saw the two last of this breed. The office of a minister of State is now so much more laborious, and he has to satisfy the demands of such a very different class in society, that our leading statesmen in the future will, we may anticipate, be all more or less of the same stamp as Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Gladstone, and Lord Salisbury—exclusively devoted to politics, and with few interests beyond them. Lord Brougham said of Lord Grey that he regarded politics “as an amusement for grown-up gentlemen.” If this could be said with any truth of Lord Grey, we shall not be far wrong in attributing some share of the same feeling to one of his most ardent admirers.

For a long time Stanley kept ahead of Peel in the “liberality” of his opinions. On the 20th of June 1834, a Bill being brought in for the admission of Dissenters to the universities, Stanley declared himself in favour of the principle of the Bill, contending that Dissenters ought not to be excluded from the advantages of a university education,

if they had the sense to desire one, but maintaining at the same time that they must not be admitted either to the governing or the educational body of the university. Sir Robert Peel, on the other hand, was opposed equally to the principle and details of the Bill, which he would oppose to the uttermost of his power. Mr. Stanley also spoke in favour of Lord Althorpe's proposal to substitute for Church Rates a fixed charge on the Land Tax. Curiously enough, on what was the great measure of the session, the new Poor Law, he did not speak at all.

On the resignation of Lord Grey in July, Lord Melbourne became Prime Minister; but the new Government was short-lived. In November Lord Spencer died; and Lord Althorpe went to the House of Lords. When Lord Melbourne consulted the King on the new ministerial arrangements which became necessary in consequence, His Majesty informed him that he had no further occasion for his services, and was resolved to change the administration. Then followed that winter so admirably described in *Coningsby*.

It was a lively season, that winter of 1834! What hopes, what fears, and what bets! From the day on which Mr. Hudson was to arrive at Rome, to the election of the Speaker, not a contingency that was not the subject of a wager! People sprang up like mushrooms; town suddenly became full. Everybody who had been in office, and everybody who wished to be in office; everybody who had ever had anything, and everybody who ever expected to have anything, were alike visible. All, of course by mere accident; one might meet the same men regularly every day for a month, who were only "passing through town."

The position of Mr. Stanley at this time was a commanding one. Of course no negotiations could be opened till Sir Robert Peel returned from Rome;

and during the whole interval "what Stanley would do" was the main topic of speculation. It was supposed that if he and his associates joined the new Government at once it would go a long way towards ensuring them a majority at the dissolution. But in a speech which he made at Glasgow, on the 17th of December, on his installation as Lord Rector, it was observed that, while lavish of his praises of Lord Grey, he said nothing of Sir Robert Peel.

Sir Robert, of course, on his arrival in England, lost no time in communicating with the Whig statesman, who seemed to hold the key of the situation. Stanley, however, while promising an independent support, declined to become a member of the Government; and he assigned his reasons in a letter which recent events have invested with peculiar interest. Lord Stanley declared at once that it was his intention to support Sir Robert Peel's Government; but that, for the reasons about to be assigned, he could do it more effectively as an independent member than as one of the Cabinet. He reminded Sir Robert that, though agreeing on the most important of all questions, the question of the Church, they had been at issue upon almost every other which had occupied the attention of Parliament during Lord Grey's administration. He then referred to the violent attack made by the Duke of Wellington on the whole of Lord Grey's conduct when that nobleman retired from office, adding that the same Duke of Wellington had been singled out for special confidence by the King, and was to hold a prominent office in the Government which he was invited to join. He thought that if he consented to do so his motives would be open to misconstruction; that he would lower himself in public

estimation ; and that in all probability the sacrifice of character involved would have been made for nothing, as it must infallibly weaken, if not destroy, the whole moral effect which had been produced by his secession from the Whigs, and which, if unimpaired, would enable him, as an independent member, to render invaluable services to the Conservatives. Those who could read between the lines might have seen that a union with Sir Robert at some future time was not very far from Stanley's thoughts. But whether he was right or wrong in his estimate of the effect which an immediate coalition would have produced on public opinion is another question. I am inclined to think that he was both.

The public certainly do not look with much favour on these sudden changes. They are often thought to savour either of levity or singularity : that is, to evince some mental or moral peculiarities which unfit a man for working harmoniously with others. To this extent it is possible that Stanley might have suffered by an immediate union with the Conservatives, and so far, therefore, he was right. But this is not the sacrifice of character. The politician belonging to a party which has been in Opposition many years, and seems likely to remain there many more, whose sole chance of office appears to be in finding some plausible excuse for quitting his old associates, and supporting those to whose principles he has always been opposed, must expect, of course, that when he does make the change the worst construction will be placed upon his motives, whether it is deserved or not. But the politician who quits a Government strong in popular support, in which he holds high office, and may look forward shortly to the highest, in order to throw in his lot with

an apparently hopeless minority, can be open to no such reproach; and so far, I think Stanley was wrong.

The pear, however, was not ripe. Stanley's party had no mind to go over in a body to the Tories; and he himself, it is evident, did not wish to close the door against all reconciliation with his former colleagues till he had seen something more of the policy of the Conservative Party. Would Peel or Wellington be their inspiring spirit? Were the old hundred and forty or the new hundred and forty, the "topboot Tories" or the Tamworth Conservatives, to give the tone to the party? With Peel, Lord Stanley could have acted cordially from the first. But he was not so sure either of the Duke or of the rank and file; and he had no fancy for being shipwrecked with a reactionary section, to the ruin of his future prospects. He could not stake his career on such a chance as this; even had his accession to the Government been sure to be productive of the immediate good effects which many people predicted from it. Neither Lord Stanley, however, nor Sir James Graham believed that any such step would save the Government at the moment. The general election, though it resulted in large gain to the Conservatives, had not given them a majority. The Stanley party in the Lower House, christened by O'Connell "the Derby Dilly," consisted nominally of about fifty members. But of these not more than a third could be relied upon to act regularly with the Government. These would bring up the strength of the party to about 297 or 298—not enough for a Government but enough for a very powerful Opposition, likely, under Peel's management, to increase in popularity every year, till the time would

come when he could again appeal to the country with every prospect of success. As far as it is possible to divine the thoughts which were passing through a man's mind more than fifty years ago, such seems to have been the reasoning on which Stanley acted. But he supported the new Government on every occasion, and defended all their measures with great ability and force of argument.

The new Parliament assembled on the 19th of February, and the battle began at once. After carrying their own man (Mr. Abercromby) for the Chair, the Opposition developed their main attack and brought up the Irish Church question. Stanley's speech of Wednesday, April the 1st, on Lord John Russell's resolution, "that the House do resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider the temporalities of the Church of Ireland," was especially good, when he exposed, with great effect, the inconsistency of O'Connell, who had railed at Littleton's Bill because tithes would not be extinguished under it for five years, and now supported Lord John's resolution, to which it would be impossible to give effect in less than fifty.* It was a capital debating point, though it may not bear close examination. The Government, however, were defeated by a majority of twenty-five; and on the following day, April 7th, the Report of Lord Althorpe's Committee was laid upon the table, containing a recommendation that the surplus revenues of the Church of Ireland should be applied to secular purposes. Lord John Russell then moved a resolution—"That it is the opinion of this House that no measure upon the sub-

* Cf Sir Robert Peel, *Hansard* xxvii. p. 959.

ject of tithes can lead to a satisfactory and final adjustment which does not embody the principle contained in the foregoing resolution." Stanley did not speak on this motion, which was carried the same night by a majority of twenty-seven, and then Sir Robert Peel resigned. Stanley thought he ought to have resigned before, and, describing the situation in one of his favourite metaphors, said that Sir Robert should have died in the open like a gallant fox instead of turning up his toes in a ditch. This remark again is said to have given considerable offence; but I have no doubt that Lord Stanley was quite unaware that anybody was likely to be hurt by it. It was a sporting joke, and no more. The joke at the Carlton was that Peel had every virtue but resignation.

It was not to be supposed that while Stanley appeared to be hovering between the two camps, he should escape some allusion to his famous ancestor at Bosworth. An Irishman, Mr. Ronayne, the member for Clonmel, who had been so scandalised at Stanley putting his legs on the table, read to the House a passage from Hume, in which he says that Lord Stanley, who commanded 7,000 men, took care to post himself at Atherstone (that is just below the gangway) and "made such a disposition of his forces as enabled him, on occasion, to join either party." But with Stanley the day of hesitation was over. He had tried the Conservatives, and *not* found them wanting. Sir Robert Peel had produced a list of measures perfectly satisfactory to a constitutional Liberal and practical reformer, as Stanley called himself; and, what was more, it was evident that the party, as now constituted, were ready to support Peel. This was all that Stanley had waited to be assured of; and now

appealing, in his turn, from the new Whigs to the old, he shook the dust off his feet against the degenerate representatives of Burke, Rockingham, and Walpole, whom he left to their Irish allies,* and formally united himself with the Liberal-Conservative Party, which Peel had called into existence. On the 1st of July, 1835, Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham quitted their seats below the gangway on the Ministerial side of the House, and crossed over to the opposite benches. They were followed by Lord George Bentinck, Sir Stratford Canning, Sir Mathew White Ridley and a few others, and thenceforth were merged in the ranks of the Conservative Party. The immediate cause of their taking this step is said to have been two-fold: an attack on Lord Stanley in the *Globe*, then, of course, a Whig organ, and a satirical remark addressed to Sir James Graham in the House of Commons. He had been talking to a friend on the Conservative benches, and was about to resume his own seat, when a voice called out from the Ministerial side "Stay there!" which he accordingly did.

It was commonly supposed that on leaving Lord Grey's Government it was the object of Lord Stanley to form a party of his own, and that he never intended, in the first instance, to serve under Peel. If such were his object, I do not see that he was to blame for it. The state of parties at the moment was eminently favourable to the attempt. The formation of a great middle party, independent alike of the Radicals and Repealers on the one hand, and of the stationary Tories on the other—the "hundred and forty" to whom I have already referred—would certainly have

* Lichfield House Compact, Sunday, March 15th, 1835.

pleased the public. Of the old Whigs and Canningites, many would have joined such a Government had the banner once been unfurled by a Whig statesman to whom Lord Grey was willing to resign the leadership.* Whether Lord Stanley was exactly the man to preside over a party of this description is another question. But to have aspired to that position would be rather to his credit than otherwise. Lord Palmerston, who was generally a pretty shrewd judge of his contemporaries, was at fault, however, in his estimate of Stanley. On the 10th of March 1835, he writes to William Cowper as follows :—

We have beaten the Ministry twice—on the Speakership and on the Address—but not by the majority I expected. Still they are in a minority, even when aided by Stanley, and no Government can possibly go on if it has not a majority, and a *sure* majority, in the House of Commons. Whenever Stanley votes against them with his fifty followers, they will be in a woful plight; and he will do so when the proper time comes. They want to coax him to join them, and then the Duke would make believe to retire by going to the Horse Guards, and Goulburn and Herries, &c., would make way for Stanley's friends; but Stanley will not give in to this. He has a much better game to play by keeping aloof. It never could answer to him to place himself as Peel's second and follower, abandoning all the natural and hereditary connections of the Derby family, and transplanting himself into the Tory nursery. He will do no such thing. He will try to keep the present Government in till the Irish Church question is settled, and when that only point of difference between himself and his late colleagues is got rid of he will turn round on Peel, and help to knock him over, and join in re-establishing a Whig Administration.

Both these prophecies were wrong; for Stanley never did vote against the Tory Government, except in one solitary instance, which could not be made a Cabinet question, and he did place himself under

* It is not generally known, I think, how near Lord Grey himself was to a coalition with the Tories during the Wellington Administration.

Sir Robert Peel. It is possible that Lord Palmerston may have been right in supposing that he did not abandon the reversion of the leadership of one party without some view to an equally high position in another. That might come, or it might not. But in the meantime his own duty was clear. It is quite unnecessary to believe that he contemplated any such treachery towards Sir Robert Peel as is here coolly suggested. He may have thought, as many others did, that the new constituencies would never return a Conservative majority, and that if a constitutional party were to be formed at all, it could only be done by a coalition between the Conservative Whigs and the Liberal Conservatives. Who was to be the leader of such a party might be matter for future consideration. It might very well be that before that happened he himself would be in another place: and then the division of power between himself and Sir Robert Peel would be comparatively easy. It is curious to reflect what a very different future fate had in store for him; that he and Peel practically changed places; that Stanley became the leader of the high Tories, and Peel of the moderate; and that Peel, at the date of his death, may have been revolving the very same project which, in 1835, was attributed to Stanley.

But whether he entertained the views imputed to him by Lord Palmerston or not, I am convinced that they did not constitute his ruling motive, and that he would have acted as he did had no such "game" been even possible. I have often been told by those who knew Lord Derby well that, in spite of some qualities which might seem inconsistent with it, his dominant characteristic was a sense of duty. It was

a sense of duty which made him take the leadership of the party in 1846. It was a sense of duty which forbade him to form what he feared would be a weak Government in 1855, when the country stood so urgently in need of a strong one. And it was a sense of duty which led him to join Sir Robert Peel in 1835, when it seemed to him that such was the combination most in harmony with the public interests, and the only one able to counteract the alliance of the Whigs, the Radicals, and the Repealers, which had been formed at Lichfield House. He may have nourished other thoughts as well, but when he took his seat on the Conservative benches it must have been with the full consciousness that they would now have to be abandoned; and whether the sacrifice was small or great, supposing there was any sacrifice at all, he made it cheerfully at the call of duty. Had he been thinking only of himself he would have continued his independent support of Sir Robert Peel from the Liberal benches. Nothing was more remote from Lord Derby's mind and character than to think of politics as a game.

On the hypothesis that Lord Palmerston was right, and that Stanley, both when he left Lord Grey and when he declined the offer of Sir Robert Peel, was looking forward to be leader of a party composed of the moderate men of both sides, we have in the history of the political crisis of 1834-35 only another illustration of the difficulty, not to say impossibility, of constructing any third party in English politics capable of acting on a large scale, and swinging free of all connection with either of the other two. Parties, like other things, are in a state of perpetual corruption and generation; third parties or new

parties are continually growing up within the ranks of the old ones, and, as these decay, burst through the shell, and push on one side the *débris* of the parent fabric. But what is commonly meant by a third party is one formed by an eclectic process, while the other two are still in full health and vigour. The nearest approach to success which has attended any such attempt was in 1827, and the recollection of that may have animated Stanley in 1834. But the mere mechanical difficulties in the way of such a scheme are considerable. The House of Commons has only two sides, and where is the third party to sit? Supposing the House to consist of three hundred and fifty moderates, a hundred and fifty Radicals, and a hundred and fifty Tories, how are they to be distributed? It would be absurd for the two extremes to sit together; yet there would be no other way of managing it. But, of course, the real difficulty consists in this, that those fundamental differences of political opinion which alone can divide men permanently and in sufficiently large masses for the purposes of party Government, are few and simple; and though they may from time to time assume different phases, and be called by different names, are always substantially the same, and depend upon the same *αρχή*. There are but two theories of Government in the broadest sense of the term—the theory of subordination, and the theory of equality; and the struggle between the two, which is probably destined to last as long as the world endures, constitutes the history of politics. Anything middle course can only be a modification or transition state of either Conservatism or Radicalism.

CHAPTER V.

STANLEY AS A CONSERVATIVE.

1835-1846,

Stanley's opposition to the measures of Lord Melbourne's Government—The Church Bills—The Church Rate Bill—Speech on the Pension List—Religious education—The Irish Registration Bills—Decline and fall of the Whigs—Mr. Stanley Secretary for the Colonies—The Canadian Corn Bill—Speeches on Irish affairs—Raised to the peerage—The Maynooth Bill—Stanley *v.* Peel—The Order in Council—Lord John Russell's Edinburgh letter—Stanley's resignation—He declines to form a Government—His position on the Free Trade question.

WITH the formal accession of Lord Stanley to the Conservative Party, the creative or constructive part of his career may be said to terminate. But into the three years and a half during which he was a member of Lord Grey's Government he had compressed as much work as many men get through in a lifetime. He had abolished slavery. He had preserved the Empire. He had saved the Irish Church. Had the vigorous old age of Mr. Gladstone been allotted to Lord Derby, she might not have been saved in vain.

Trojaque nunc staret : Priamique arx alta maneres.

Sir Robert Peel having resigned office on the 8th of April, Lord Melbourne's second administration

was completed by the 18th, and on the 20th both houses were adjourned to the 12th of May. When Parliament reassembled the Government stated that the only two measures with which they intended to proceed during the remainder of the Session were the Irish Tithes Bill and the Municipal Corporations Bill. Both of these measures embraced provisions very distasteful to Lord Stanley. The Tithes Bill, introduced by the new Irish Secretary, Lord Morpeth, revived the objectionable appropriation scheme. The Municipal Corporations Act placed a new power in the hands of the Dissenters, the effect of which was foreseen by none more clearly than by the Prime Minister himself. "You may not see the consequence of this to-morrow," he said to an intimate friend. "But you have given by law a permanent power in all the centres of industry and intelligence to the Dissenters which they never had before, and which they never would have had otherwise. They are the classes who will really gain by the change, not the mob or the theorists. Depend upon it, it is the Established Church, not the hereditary peerage, that has need to set its house in order."

As far as the tithe question itself was concerned, the Bill did not differ materially from the arrangement which had been sanctioned by all parties.* But appended to this scheme was a plan for suppressing the Established Church in 860 parishes, and handing over any surplus revenues that might remain in the hands of the Commissioners to be employed for secular purposes. On this the two great parties again joined issue; Lord Stanley and Sir Robert

* A rent-charge of 75 per cent.

Peel fighting side by side against a principle to which the latter remained true to the last hour of his life. It is unnecessary to specify in detail all the conflicts that took place over this proposal for the next three years. Its ultimate fate was mixed up with another Irish question, on which also Lord Stanley felt very strongly, the Irish Corporations Act, throwing open the Corporations to Roman Catholics. In 1838 a compromise was arranged, by which Peel and Stanley withdrew their opposition to the Corporations Bill, on Government consenting to abandon their pet appropriation clause. The Tithe Bill accordingly became law in 1838, and the Corporation Bill in 1840,* and these two questions were laid at rest for nearly forty years. The Opposition made a vigorous attempt to procure the effacement of Lord John's resolutions, which turned out Peel in 1835, but were beaten by nineteen. Stanley said that no Government had ever so completely stultified itself as Lord John Russell's, by the retention of this resolution on the Journals of the House. If in 1835 no settlement of the question could be satisfactory which did not include an appropriation clause, how could a settlement which did not contain it be described as satisfactory now? Both statements could not be true. The clause had been declared essential when it was necessary to turn out Peel, and declared to be non-essential when it was necessary to keep in Russell.

The third Irish question in which Lord Stanley took deep interest was the Irish Poor Law. But he would not take upon himself, he said, to oppose the principle of the Bill. He objected strongly to many of its

* The delay was occasioned by Lord Lyndhurst's amendments.

details ; and his speech on the third reading, April 30, 1838, is remarkable for the statement that, at that time, the proportion of outdoor to indoor relief in England was as eight to one.

To the principle of the English Municipal Corporations Bill neither Sir Robert Peel nor Lord Stanley offered any serious opposition. A case for reform had been clearly made out ; and all they attempted was to modify, as far as they could, some of the details. During the six Sessions that followed 1835, it cannot be said that the Whig Government was barren. Besides the Irish Bills we have already mentioned, they passed the English Municipal Corporations Act, the English Tithe Commutation Act, and three Bills for the reform of the English Established Church. But besides these questions on which actual legislation took place, several others of at least equal importance were from time to time brought forward and discussed with great warmth and bitterness. Among them were Church Rates, National Education, Socialism, the Corn Laws, the Irish Registration, the Condition of Canada, and the Government of Jamaica. In all or most of the debates on these various subjects Lord Stanley took a prominent part ; and there can be no doubt that through the whole period his vigorous and uncompromising eloquence contributed largely to lower the reputation of the Government in the House of Commons, and to promote that disaffection among their usual supporters which, after gradually reducing their majority to a single figure, finally destroyed it. I do not propose to follow him step by step through the Parliamentary history of the last Whig Government which administered the affairs of the country, but we may notice one or two salient points in this

period of his career when he seemed in all but age and experience to be quite on a level with Sir Robert.

It is remarkable that in the debates on the Established Church Bills of 1836, founded on the report of Sir Robert Peel's Commission in Feb. 1835, and Lord Melbourne's in the following July, Lord Stanley took very little part. Three were brought in: one relating to Bishoprics* read a second time June 17, a third time July 25, and ultimately passed. Another, styled the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenue Bill, affecting deans and chapters, not passed till 1840; and a third, the Pluralities Bill, passed in 1838. But in the following year, on the introduction of the Ministerial Church Rate Bill, he found it necessary to reconcile his opposition to it with his speech in 1833 on the Irish Church Temporalities Bill. But the distinction between the two cases, though real, was somewhat delicate, and a good many of his hearers did not, I think, completely grasp it. Lord Melbourne's Bill proposed that the management of Church Lands should be vested in Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and that after making the necessary payments out of it, the surplus, which was confidently anticipated, should form a substitute for Church Rates, the latter being totally abolished. Lord Stanley and others said that as the land had been charged with the Church Rate from time immemorial, and as it had been bought and sold, and inherited with this recognised obligation upon it, the Bill was simply making a present of so much Church property to the landowners. If her estates could be improved by any different kind of management well and good; but

* For the readjustment and redistribution of the boundaries and revenues of existing Bishoprics, and the creation of two new ones.

the property with the increment was as much her own as the property without it. It could not be severed from the original ownership: whereas it was now virtually proposed to hand it over to somebody else. It mattered nothing which particular sum you gave away, the Church Rate or the improved value. It was the same thing in the end. Lord Stanley contended that this was a different proposal from his own, by which in the first place the Irish Church would have been no loser, and which in the second place dealt only with such increased value as might accrue from the terms of letting; it did not touch the increased fertility or productiveness of the soil itself. The ministerial proposal, however, was only carried by a majority of five on the 25th of May, and the King's death in the following month put an end to the proceedings.

In the new Parliament Lord Stanley's future colleague, Mr. Disraeli, made his first appearance, and it may not be generally known that it was Lord Stanley who made way for him on the occasion of his maiden speech. Lord Stanley was to have answered O'Connell in the debate on Irish elections, but while O'Connell was speaking Mr. Disraeli went up to Lord Stanley and asked to be allowed to follow. The permission was readily granted. When Disraeli sat down Lord Stanley rose, but *Hansard* contains no record of any observations on the speech to which he had listened.

It was on the Pension List that Lord Stanley made his best speech at this particular time against the injustice of taking away pensions from those who had every right to believe that they were granted for life. He pointed out how the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Lord John Russell were contradicting what they had said as members of Lord

Grey's Government, and threw the authority of Lord Grey and Althorpe in their teeth. But the Rupert of debate did not always escape the same kind of inconvenience which attended the Rupert of battles. He was now to find out that in his thimble-rig speech he had gone too far, and it was brought up against him with good effect by Lord John Russell.

The principal other subjects to which it is necessary to refer during the remainder of Lord Melbourne's administration, are the Education Bill of 1839, the Irish Registration Bills, and the Questions of Canada and Jamaica. With the two first, and with Jamaica, Stanley's connection was very intimate. The Ministry, early in 1839, brought forward a scheme for establishing the present Committee of Council on Education, and transferring to its hands the dispensation of the Government Grant which had hitherto been dispensed by the National Society and the British and Foreign School Society. Stanley, on the 14th of June, made a great speech attacking this scheme, on the ground that the control of education should not be taken out of the hands of the ministers of religion. His contention on this occasion was not that the Church of England was entitled to any exclusive preference in the assistance given to Government to national education; but that any education expressly sanctioned by the State must be religious education, and the proposed Committee of Council afforded no guarantee that it should be so. There was much in his speech which might be considered prophetic. And he concluded in the following terms:—

When you, the House of Commons [concluded the noble Lord], shall have consented to yield into the hands of the Ministers these large discretionary powers, it is very possible that the return for

yielding them will be to use those very powers for the introduction of a scheme which to your face they would not attempt to defend, but to which they still tenaciously cling. I feel that I have trespassed on your attention too long. I feel that I have very inadequately discharged the duty which I have thought it requisite to impose upon myself. But I feel confident in the good feeling which animates the majority of the inhabitants of this country. I feel confident that the majority—that the vast majority of the religious public of all denominations have already condemned this scheme and the Council in which it originated; that the bulk of the constituencies in this country have condemned and will continue to condemn it; and I am not without hope that, yielding to the manifestation of public opinion, the majority of this House will not be found this night to sanction a scheme which has already been condemned—unequivocally condemned—by the religious public, and denounced by the bulk of the constituencies, which takes away from the legitimate authority of Parliament that control which it ought to exercise over the education of the people, and vests it in an irresponsible jurisdiction; which separates the religious education of the Established Church from the supervision of her authorised ministers, for which, if improperly delegated to laymen, of whatever persuasion, you will have no ground for reproaching them (as they have already altered their scheme once) with changing its entire form and substance, if it so should please them, hereafter; and which, if you do not repudiate at once, you will have lent your hands to the establishment, as I firmly believe, of a system which has a direct tendency to unsettle the minds of the young people of this country; which will, however unjustly, induce a general belief that, in the mind of the Legislature, an equal degree of authority is due to all versions of the Scriptures whatever, and that it is a matter of perfect indifference in what creed the population of this country shall be brought up; and, finally, which by presenting before the eyes of our youth as of equal weight and equal authority matters which should be so carefully distinguished as distinct versions of the sacred writings, and essential differences in point of faith, would speedily sap the foundations of all faith, and, what constitutes, in my estimation, the strongest ground of objection to the measure, would gradually lead to general scepticism, and from general scepticism to national infidelity.

Stanley's Irish Registration Bills again brought him into collision with O'Connell, and it was on this occasion that he earned from the Liberator the epithet of "Scorpion Stanley." In 1829 Sir Robert Peel had

passed an Act disfranchising the forty-shilling freeholders in Ireland, and restricting the franchise to £10 freeholders. But the system of registration still remained very favourable to the manufacture of fictitious votes which, it was supposed, were largely resorted to by the repeal party. When a voter had once established his claim it was good for eight years, and he received a certificate from the Clerk of the Peace, authorising him to vote at any election for the next eight years. But in the meantime he could, if he liked, obtain a fresh certificate every half year, and handing these over to other persons, could create as many false votes as he had certificates. It was this system which Stanley proposed to abolish. He introduced a Bill for this purpose on the 25th of March 1840, carried the second reading against Ministers by a majority of sixteen, and beat them at every subsequent stage, till finally he was obliged to succumb to the pressure of Government business, and withdrew the Bill on the 6th of July. In the following session he introduced another measure for the same purpose; but Government interposed this time with a measure of their own, which was so cut to pieces in the course of the session, that it, too, was withdrawn on the 29th of May. O'Connell called Stanley's Bill a measure "for trampling on the rights of the people of Ireland"; and after one division, in which Government had been heavily beaten, he described the cheers of the Opposition as "beastly bellowing." These were the days of cock-crowing in the House of Commons, and it is very possible that after Stanley's numerous victories there was a good deal of it.

The Jamaica Question was one of special interest to Lord Stanley, as it arose out of his own great

measure for the abolition of slavery. The Government had carried a Bill for the better regulation of the prisons in Jamaica. The House of Assembly in that island declared it a violation of their rights, and refused to exercise their functions till it should be withdrawn. Government replied by a Bill to suspend the Constitution. It was read a second time on the 22nd of April; and on the motion for Committee on the 3rd of May, the attack began. Stanley spoke on the 6th, and defended himself with his usual vigour against Charles Buller, who described the Emancipation Act as a signal failure. Buller's contention was that you could not combine the freedom of the negro population with government by an aristocracy of planters, and that the Emancipation Act should have embraced also a Colonial Parliamentary Reform Bill. The argument has some logical force, but Stanley's answer was practical. What chance would there have been of carrying through Parliament an Emancipation Bill with a Reform Bill on its back? The Government had just strength enough for one. They had certainly not enough for both. On the division that ensued, Ministers had a majority of only five. Lord Melbourne resigned. The Bedchamber Plot followed, and Ministers resumed their seats. But Stanley took no part in these discussions; nor is it necessary to quote from his speeches on the affairs of Canada, or on the Ecclesiastical Revenues and Duties Bill. We may pass on at once to the final scenes of Lord Melbourne's Government; to the vote of want of confidence, defeated in 1840 by a majority of only twenty-one, and carried the following year by a majority of one. On the former occasion Lord Stanley, I think, made the better speech of the two; and his descrip-

tion of the kind of confidence reposed in the Government by their supporters in the House of Commons was in his best style. Not to linger, however, over the last dying struggles of the last Whig administrations, I may briefly say that on the resignation of Lord Melbourne in the following summer, Lord Stanley became Secretary for the Colonies in Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet, and that, oddly enough, it was first of all through his agency that suspicions were awakened in the agricultural mind with regard to the security of the Corn Laws.

The measure which gave rise to this distrust, never afterwards entirely set at rest, was Lord Stanley's Canadian Corn Bill, reducing the duty on Canadian wheat to a shilling a quarter. Stanley had offered the colonists this concession on condition that they could impose a duty on the importation into Canada of American wheat which might otherwise pass through Canada to England duty free. The Canadians jumped at the offer, and a Bill to carry out the arrangement received the Royal assent on the 12th of July 1843. Lord Stanley, at the conclusion of the speech in which he introduced the measure, recommended it on grounds equally applicable to all our corn-growing colonies, thus confirming what he says in his letter to Croker, to which I have already referred, that he was in favour of free trade with the colonies, and protection against the rest of the world. Nor was this the only evidence which he gave of his having been educated in a different school from that in which the majority of his party had been trained. We have seen that in 1834 he had supported a motion for the admission of Dissenters to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In 1843 he opposed a motion to the same

effect, only on the ground that in the meantime another University, the University of London, had been provided for them.

Ireland, of course, continued to occupy a great deal of the attention of Parliament, and Lord Stanley defended the Government policy both in 1843 and 1844 with great ability. On the former occasion, in particular, he answered Lord John Russell with great effect, who, while continuing to condemn the Government, admitted at the same time that he knew of no remedy himself. "Evictions might be perfectly just," he said, "but midnight revenge takes no note of justice." "At least," said Lord Stanley, who was speaking on the Arms Bill, "it will be allowed that to place some limit on the means whereby midnight revenge is carried out, is not altogether beyond the line of ordinary prudence and humanity." In 1844, in opposing Lord John Russell's motion for an inquiry into the condition of Ireland, he said, "Against the confiscation of Church property I will raise my voice, while I have a voice to raise within the walls of Parliament." He, at the same time, quoted some extracts from Lord Palmerston's speeches in 1829 singularly interesting in connection with the legislation of 1869. In October of this year Lord Stanley was raised to the peerage with the title of Lord Stanley of Bickerstaffe, and his services were lost to his party in the House of Commons just at the moment when they were about to be so sorely needed.

The next year, 1845, was the Maynooth year, and Mr. Gladstone has told us, in acknowledging Lord Derby's many acts of kindness, how he tried to dissuade him from quitting Sir Robert Peel's Government on this occasion. Lord Stanley's first important speech in the House of Lords was on this subject. The

next was on the introduction of a Bill providing compensation for unexhausted improvements to Irish tenants. The Government were unable to proceed with the Bill, and it was abandoned towards the close of the session. But Lord Stanley's speech is extremely interesting, as it shows him to have been quite alive to the requirements of agriculture both in Ireland and England, and ready to deal with it in a liberal and equitable spirit. On July 21st he moved the second reading of the "Godless Colleges" Bill. But there is nothing remarkable in his speech, unless it is the fact that this was the last important duty which he ever performed in Parliament as a member of Sir Robert Peel's administration. Before Parliament assembled again he had ceased to belong to it.

Sir Robert Peel and Lord Stanley were never a well assorted couple. Both were scholars, and both were sportsmen. But they had little else in common. Peel was every inch the man of affairs—cautious, reticent, business-like, who thought deeply on the economic questions of the day, and, though a patron of literature and art, yet really engrossed in politics, to which his whole life had been devoted, intolerant of any approach to levity in reference to political subjects, perhaps a little stiff and extremely sensitive, and, above all, fearful of ridicule. Lord Stanley presents in many respects just the reverse of this picture—impulsive, careless, outspoken, and, though capable of severe application at the call of duty, naturally averse from it. It was his lot to enter public life just on the eve of perhaps the longest and most arduous party struggle which this country has ever witnessed since the accession of the present Royal Family. In this school Stanley was trained. It was

a time when the political gladiator was in far greater request than the political philosopher, when fearless and fiery invective, stinging taunts, and contemptuous raillery were weapons more highly prized than the profoundest knowledge of political or economic science. What Stanley might have been under a different training it is impossible to say. But his mind received its bent or ply from the early contests in which he was engaged, and the delight of battle was his ruling passion to the last. Thus in time he came to love politics almost for this alone, and he could never adapt himself to the sober gravity and somewhat self-righteous "earnestness" of Peel and the Peelites. So it is said that he sometimes annoyed Sir Robert Peel in private by jests, which did not always seem sufficiently respectful to the head of Her Majesty's Government, and which Peel had no power of repaying in kind. Also in the House of Commons he did not always spare the sensitive egotism of his chief as much as etiquette might have dictated; and when he was raised to the peerage, Sir Robert Peel was doubtless quite sincere in saying that he believed his peculiar talents would be more useful in another place. It was not so much that the Tory Party in the House of Lords stood in need of his assistance, as that Peel in the House of Commons was desirous of his absence.

Separated by this gulf, however, they could probably have worked together very well but for the unfortunate catastrophe which broke up the Conservative party for a quarter of a century, and destroyed its entire usefulness as the organ of that vast body of independent Conservative opinion which certainly was then and probably is still the prevailing sentiment of England. But in 1845 Sir Robert Peel took one of those sudden deter-

minations for which he was famous, and, goaded by a premature panic, proceeded to do at one blow, without warning, without any attempt at reconciling his followers to the necessity, what might just as well have been done gradually, and with the sincere if reluctant consent of the whole Conservative Party.

It was on the 1st of November 1845 that a Cabinet Council was held to take into consideration the condition of Ireland, then threatened with famine by the failure of the potato crop. Sir Robert Peel proposed that all restrictions upon the importation of foreign corn should be at once suspended by an Order in Council, giving his colleagues to understand, however, at the same time that any departure from the existing system would, in his own opinion, make it very difficult to return to it. We are not to understand that he was prepared to say as much as this in his place in Parliament; and it must be remembered, of course, that the abstract merits of the Corn Laws, and the argument in favour of their suspension, drawn from the condition of Ireland in 1845, are two distinct things. Lord Stanley addressed himself to the latter; and I believe it is generally admitted that on this particular point in the controversy Sir Robert Peel was wrong—wrong, that is, in the conclusion which he drew, or professed to draw, from the condition of Ireland in particular.

Lord Stanley said it was impossible at that season of the year to form any accurate judgment of the prospect of scarcity in Ireland. Not a third of the potatoes had been dug up, and, more than that, it was necessary to bear in mind the difference between a regular famine and local or individual distress, however severe. He allowed that the failure of the potato crop would involve the whole body of small cottiers in absolute

destitution. They depended exclusively on their potatoes, and had no money with which to buy food if that supply were cut off. Merely to lower the price of corn, then, would be no relief to this class of sufferers. To the wretch who is literally penniless, cheapness and dearness are unmeaning terms. A threepenny loaf is as much beyond his reach as a shilling one. The opening of the ports, therefore, would be an empty boon to men without a farthing in their pockets. "But take another class of Irish peasants," said Lord Stanley, "just one remove above these:—the small farmers cultivating from ten to fifteen acres of land, of whom there were in Ireland nearly six millions. These men did not grow potatoes only, but potatoes and oats as well. When the one failed they had some resource in the other. If they had no potatoes they could fall back upon their oats, the price of which would enable them to buy bread. But now," said Lord Stanley, "by way of compensating them for the loss of their roots, you are about to lower the value of their grain. Of the two great classes of sufferers in Ireland, your scheme of relief will do no good to the one and will only aggravate the misery of the other." Sir Robert Peel's views, no doubt, extended beyond Ireland. But he did not at this moment press them on the Cabinet, the majority of whom, including the Duke of Wellington, assented to the justice of Lord Stanley's reasoning, and, as he knew Ireland well, his opinion carried great weight with it. The Cabinet, after four meetings in one week, accordingly separated on the 6th of November, on the understanding that Sir Robert's proposals were, for the present, at all events, abandoned.

Just a fortnight afterwards appeared the Edinburgh

letter of Lord John Russell, adopting the principle of unlimited free trade, and thus in a measure throwing down the gauntlet to the Government. This letter, if I may use such an expression, seems to have struck Sir Robert "all of a heap." It completely took the wind out of his sails; and, summoning another Cabinet for the 26th, he declared that the political situation was now completely changed; that to suggest only the opening of the ports, and the suspension of the Corn Laws, would be a servile imitation of the Whigs, to which he could not stoop, and that either his colleagues must now support him in the total repeal of the Corn Laws, or he must immediately retire from the helm.

The effect of this declaration was instantaneous. Lord Stanley, who three weeks before carried the majority of the Cabinet with him, now stood alone. But he did not decide with precipitation. He asked two days for consideration, and then made the following statement. He had been ready so far to sacrifice his own opinions as to consent to the suspension of the Corn Laws; but when he understood that what was to begin with suspension was to end with total abolition, he found himself unable to be a party to what wore the appearance of a stratagem. He had come to this conclusion, and we can easily believe him, with the deepest pain. But he could not persuade himself that the real interests of the country could be served by the sacrifice of public and personal character. This was the very answer which Sir Robert Peel returned to the Duke of Wellington when invited to come to his assistance in 1832. It was the very answer which Lord Stanley returned to Sir Robert Peel when asked to join his Government in 1834. And in each of these cases it has always been considered a sufficient one.

The defection of Lord Stanley determined Sir Robert Peel to break up the Government, and in the course of the negotiations which ensued, and which on Lord John Russell's failure to form a Whig administration, ended in Sir Robert Peel's return to power, Lord Stanley was offered the chance of forming a Protectionist Government if he were minded to try—an offer which he characteristically declined, on the ground that he should have no colleagues. In this instance, however, it seems not impossible that a Government might have been formed on some principle short of total abolition. Lord Palmerston, at all events, spoke distinctly in favour of Protection, and intimated that others besides himself were of the same way of thinking.

I am [said he] for a moderate fixed duty. My noble and honourable friends near me have also been of the same opinion, and allow me to say that this opinion was not taken up by us, as stated last night by the noble lord, the member for King's Lynn, when the late Government was, as he said, *in articulo mortis*; but as far back as 1839, when there was no reason to expect an early termination to our official career, I say, then, that my wish would have been to have a low fixed duty on the importation of corn. I think that a duty of four or five shillings would not sensibly raise the price of corn in this country, would be felt by nobody, would produce a revenue not undeserving of consideration, and, what is of more importance, would enable us to accomplish a great transition with less violence to the feelings and prejudices of a large class of men.

Lord Stanley himself, who had shared the views of Mr. Canning, Mr. Huskisson, and Lord Liverpool on the question of the Corn Laws, and who in 1842 had advocated free trade with the Colonies, was no bigoted adherent of the principle of Protection. That must always be remembered. And if we wanted any further proof of this assertion we have it from Lord

Stanley's own lips in the speech which he made in the House of Lords on the 25th of May 1846. Greville styles this "a magnificent speech." Palmerston said that nobody could have made a better. His son, the present Lord Derby, thinks it the best he ever made. It certainly put the whole case, not only with great clearness but also with great power; and he, too, like Lord Beaconsfield, appealed to higher considerations than purely economical ones. Speaking of the English aristocracy he said:

Do not mistake me when I speak of the aristocracy. I do not speak exclusively or mainly of that body which I have now the honour to address. I speak, my lords, of the great body of the landed proprietors of this country. I speak of men unennobled by rank, and many of them undistinguished by great wealth, but who, and their ancestors before them for generations after generations, have been the centre each of his respective locality, who have the *prestige* of old associations attached to their names; who conduct the business of their respective counties; who influence the opinions and feelings of their respective neighbourhoods; who exercise a decent hospitality, and preside over a tenantry who have hereditary claims upon their considerations and affections. My lords, these are the aristocracy of this country to whom I allude. Reduce these men and you inflict an irretrievable and irreparable injury upon the country. Lower them in the scale, and you have deranged the social machine beyond the power of correction. God forbid that the successful manufacturer or that the princely merchant should not take his place among the landed aristocracy of this country! Such infusions add fresh vigour and power to that class of the community; but, depend upon it, if you sweep that class away at once, with all the associations attached to their names, their families, their histories, and the previous associations which belong to the character of their families, and substitute a new body of capitalists, to come amidst an unattached tenantry, and a neighbourhood where no associations are connected with their names, their moral influence and effect will be irretrievably lost. Now, destroy this principle of Protection, and I tell you in this place that you destroy the whole basis upon which your Colonial system rests. My lords, if you do not know the advantages of your Colonies, Napoleon Buonaparte knew them well. It is by your Colonial system,

based upon the principles of Protection, that you have extended your arms—I do not mean your military arms, but your commercial arms—to every quarter and to every corner of the globe. It is to your Colonial system that you owe it that there is not a sea on which the flag of England does not float; that there is not a quarter of the world in which the language of England is not heard; that there is not a quarter of the globe, that there is no zone in either hemisphere, in which there are not thousands who recognize the sovereignty of Britain—to whom that language and that flag speak of a home, dear though distant, of common interests, of common affections—men who share in your glories, men who sympathise in your adversities, men who are proud to bear their share of your burdens, to be embraced within the arms of your commercial policy, and to feel that they are members of your great and imperial Zollverein.

With this speech may be compared Mr. Gladstone's description of the English aristocracy in 1870, and Lord Stanley's letter to Croker of June 20, 1847, in which will be found a complete epitome of his views on the subject of the Corn Laws, and also of the crisis of 1845. He ends it by saying :

Looking back at the whole transaction, I retain the impression that the Conservative party had been led to believe in Sir R. Peel's maintenance of the *principle of effective Protection*; and that they had a right to complain of, and to resent, the course which he took in making a temporary calamity subservient to the object of a total abandonment of a principle which he had led them to believe he would maintain, and in which belief he had accepted, and availed himself of, their Parliamentary support.

At this point perhaps the question will naturally be asked, how we are to reconcile this language with the speech of 1829, in which Sir Robert Peel is praised so highly for preferring what he conceived to be the public interests to all other considerations whatsoever. Sir Robert Peel threw over the Protestant interest as he threw over the agricultural interest, when their claims seemed to clash with still more important obligations, and the excuse which held good for the one

act of inconsistency might be thought to hold good for the other. But the two cases are not exactly parallel. Sir Robert Peel was never installed as leader of the whole Tory party for the exclusive purpose of maintaining the Roman Catholic disabilities. The Tory party had always been divided on this question, and Sir Robert Peel, as the leader of the Protestants, only represented one division of it. After the death of Mr. Canning the leadership of the House of Commons devolved naturally on Sir Robert Peel, and must have done so as naturally as it did on Mr. Canning, to whichever section he had belonged. But in 1845 Sir Robert was not merely the leader of the House of Commons, but the leader of the whole Conservative party. Between the years 1835 and 1840 he had completely identified himself with the principle of Protection. He had not been satisfied only with offering a passive resistance to any alteration of the Corn Laws. He had on every occasion come forward as their great champion and representative, and had thoroughly educated his followers to believe alike in their justice, their utility, and their necessity. At the general election of 1841 he received what it is now the fashion to call a mandate, and thus, in relation to the Corn Laws, his responsibilities were on a larger scale, and his obligations of a more direct and binding character, than any which he had incurred with respect to Roman Catholic disabilities. Even so, however, it must be admitted that the question is only one of degree, and that Stanley in 1829 did certainly condone conduct which bore a strong family likeness to what he condemned in 1846, though in the latter the features might be more harsh and the extenuating circumstances less weighty.

Lord Stanley seems, on the whole, to have held much the same views as Lord Palmerston. He never believed for a moment that the total and immediate repeal of the Corn Laws could fail to be injurious to agriculture. He felt that it was a distinct breach of faith with a great political party, and he thought that if any extensive alteration of our protective system should really be found expedient, it should be effected gradually, so as to produce as little inconvenience, and as little irritation as possible.

CHAPTER VI.

LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY.

1846-1858.

Lord Derby's political position—Forlorn plight of the Conservatives—“Peel's Sauce”—Project of a union with Palmerston—Speech on Foreign Affairs—Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli—Speeches in 1851—Attempt to form a Ministry—The first Derby Administration—“Stemming the tide of democracy”—The General Election—Defeat of the Government—The abandonment of Protection—Lord Derby and the Bishop of Oxford—Chancellor of the University of Oxford—Lord Derby and the Crimean War—The Universities Bill—Fall of the Aberdeen Administration—He Declines to form a Ministry—The motives of Lord Palmerston and Lord Derby—The part played by Prince Albert—His explanation—Considerations suggested by it—Shooting and racing—Speech on the conduct of the War—The “Clarendon Capitulations”—Life Peerages—Session of 1857—Review of Lord Palmerston's policy—The General Election—The Ministers' Money Bill.

Down to the year 1846 I have thought it necessary to follow Lord Derby's career in some detail, partly because this is the portion of it least known to the general public; partly because it is only by studying his speeches and observing his attitude towards the various public questions that arose between the death of Mr. Canning and the death of Sir Robert Peel, that we can ever hope to understand the peculiar posi-

tion which he occupied during the last twenty years of his life. Those who remember only the Derby-Disraeli Party as it existed from 1852 to 1868 are apt to think of him as the legitimate and hereditary chief of the English Tories, and to forget that Toryism was the land of his adoption, and not the land of his birth. Lord Derby, as it seems to me, was to the last a great Conservative Whig of 1688; and he once went so far as to say that no constitutional precedents had much value for him drawn from any antecedent period. He was undoubtedly "the leader of the country gentlemen of England," a position which Sir Robert Peel professed to think more enviable than the confidence of princes. Yet it may be doubted if Lord Derby would ever have spoken of them in the terms used by Sir Robert Peel; not from want of sympathy, as is sufficiently shown by the speech which I have already quoted, but from want of habit. His family had for a century and a half belonged to that party in the State which had always been the Parliamentary opponents of the country gentlemen; and though the old principle of discord between Whig and Tory had dwindled almost to a shadow by the middle of the nineteenth century, in face of the still deeper antagonism between Conservative and Radical—*mansit odor*, the tradition lingered: and I have always myself attributed some part of the dissatisfaction which from time to time Lord Derby's leadership excited in the Conservative ranks, to this source. It kept up a certain distance between himself and the body of his supporters which was perhaps never entirely bridged over, and is the probable explanation of what was felt keenly at the time by many of his most loyal adherents; his unwillingness, I mean, to take office

without the assistance of auxiliaries drawn from the adversary's camp.

We must always remember, too, that the Stanley who, in 1846, assumed the leadership of the country party, was the same Stanley who, in 1835, declined to join Sir Robert Peel because on every great question of the day, except one, he had quite recently been opposed to him. The world, I repeat, is too apt to forget these things, in estimating the second half of his public life. But due weight must be allowed to them if we wish to understand either the history of the Conservative Party while it was led by Lord Derby, or the policy of Lord Derby while he led the Conservative Party. To say more on this subject at the present moment would be to anticipate the course of our narrative, and lead to tiresome repetition. With this general forecast of Lord Derby's future, we may proceed at once to the birth of the new party, which dates from the resignation of Sir Robert Peel on the 26th of June 1846, and the instalment of Lord Stanley as leader a few months earlier.

The great Conservative Party of 1841, the child of so many prayers, the centre of so many hopes, was now irretrievably ruined, and after the general election of 1847 its relics returned to the House of Commons in even a more forlorn plight than the Tories of 1833. Of this broken and dispirited remnant the leadership as a matter of course devolved upon Lord Stanley; the conduct of the party in the Lower House being for a time committed to Lord George Bentinck, who was a great personal friend of Lord Stanley, and shared his enthusiasm for the turf. In the midst of the crisis, in May 1846, the two friends were seen together on the course at Newmarket, laughing and

joking as if free trade, the prospects of the party, and the treachery by which they said it had been sacrificed, had all been an evil dream, which the morning breezes had dispersed.

It was just at the time when Mr. Disraeli's jokes about Peel having stolen the Whig clothes, and having borrowed "Popkins plan," were in everyone's mouth, that Lord Derby was driving with a friend from Doncaster to Rotherham, and put up at an hotel for luncheon. Lord Derby asked his companion to order some mutton chops while he went into the town for half an hour. When he came back the chops were ready, and Lord Derby asked for some sauce; his friend poured some out for him, and asked him how he liked it. "Capital," said Lord Derby, "capital." The other turned the cruet round and showed him the name on it, "Sir Robert Peel's Sauce." "Damn him," said Lord Derby, "I wonder where he stole that from."

But it was a great mistake to suppose that Lord Stanley was not in earnest because he did not turn his face to the wall and refuse cakes and ale, and Stanley had a definite political object in view, which he pursued with steadiness all the time that his foot was on his native heath, and he appeared to be absorbed in horseflesh. It was not to be supposed that an economical controversy, long and bitter as it might be, had entirely effaced from the minds of Conservatives the far more important objects which originally brought them together, and which stood as much in need of their support now as then. Lord Lyndhurst was in hopes that it might be possible to reunite the party when the Corn Law debates were at an end. But the attempt was premature, and ended in immediate

failure. Lord Stanley, on the other hand, seemed to have been harking back to the scheme which he is said to have meditated in 1835, a third party, in which the more moderate Whigs under Lord Palmerston should fill the gap created in the Conservative ranks by the defection of the Peelites, who were even then suspected of those Radical proclivities of which subsequently they made no secret. There is reason to believe that Lord Palmerston in 1847 would not have been unwilling to accept the lead of the House of Commons on these terms, had he been able to persuade himself that the arrangement was likely to be permanent. And although as time went on Lord Stanley was obliged on several occasions to attack his foreign policy very severely—notably in 1847 and 1848, when he moved formal resolutions in the House of Commons condemning his interference in the affairs, first of Portugal, and afterwards of Spain—the alliance continued to be a favourite idea with him down to the time when Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister himself. On the dismissal of our ambassador, Sir Henry Bulwer, from Madrid, he made one of the best speeches on English foreign policy in general to be found in *Hansard*. It certainly shows that Lord Derby was a truer disciple of Mr. Canning than Lord Palmerston was; and that he approximated more nearly to what is generally accepted as our proper principle of foreign policy at the present day. It might have been better, perhaps, if he had sometimes abstained from these attacks; but, in his own language, he liked to “give the Lords a gallop” when they had been quiet for a long time, and that was reason enough with him for a slashing onslaught when no other result was to be expected from it.

I have said that the leadership of the party devolved almost as a matter of course on Lord Stanley ; but he himself did not assume it without some persuasion. In fact, in 1846 he would have preferred to retire from politics. He was even at that early date feeling the approaches of the malady which ultimately proved fatal to him. He had parted from his old comrades in arms, and his own inclination was, curiously enough, the same as Sir Robert Peel's—to shake himself free from party ties altogether, and to fight the battle of the constitution as an independent peer. The letter addressed to him by the Duke of Wellington, dated February 19, 1846, may be said to have convinced him where his duty lay. The Duke pointed out to him, what indeed must have been obvious to himself, that the Conservative Party was now without a leader, that he, the Duke, by the mere fact of his remaining in the Government, was disqualified for such a post, even if there were not many other reasons which prevented him from thinking of it ; and that, in short, there was no other way of saving the party from going to pieces but by his rallying it round himself, as the natural successor of Sir Robert Peel, from whom it was now hopelessly estranged. Lord Derby took the helm without further hesitation, though the sea was stormy, the bark a frail one, and the haven a long way off.

He, now, we may suppose, began to cultivate the acquaintance of Mr. Disraeli, of whom previously he had known but little. In Disraeli's letters to his sister there are none given between August 1846 and February 1848, or we might perhaps have had some interesting allusions to the first meeting of the two future colleagues. I have tried to ascertain when they were first introduced to each other, but without

success. No doubt Lord George Bentinck, the intimate friend of both, was the connecting link between them. That Lord Derby, like the rest of the world, did not recognise at a glance the transcendent abilities which lay beneath the youthful eccentricities of his future colleague and counsellor, is quite true, and on two occasions during Lord John Russell's administration, when his advice was asked as to the leadership of the party in the Commons, his reply was unfavourable to Mr. Disraeli. In January 1849 he wrote him a highly complimentary letter, but suggested at the same time that Mr. Herries should be leader. For a time the leadership was in commission between Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Herries, and Lord Granby. But the plan naturally proving a failure, Lord Stanley deferred at once to the instinct of his party in the House of Commons, and thenceforth reposed that implicit trust in his lieutenant, which Mr. Disraeli has described as characteristic of aristocracies. They are slow to give their confidence, he says, but they never give it by halves. And Lord Derby was heard to speak more than once of the "unswerving loyalty" with which he had been served by Mr. Disraeli for a long period of years. The two men never, I believe, became really intimate. They were not congenial spirits, and Lord Stanley, with his Whig traditions, could never have sympathised with the satirist of the Venetian Constitution. But their official connection was unbroken, and it is pleasant to know that Mr. Disraeli's loyalty and fidelity, under very trying circumstances, were recognised and appreciated by his chief.

It is unnecessary to linger over further details till we arrive at the February of 1851, when it became apparent that Lord John Russell's Administration

could not hold together much longer. One great speech of Lord Stanley's may be mentioned during the interval, that, namely, on the Dolly's Brae affair, for his share in which Lord Roden and some other Irish magistrates had been dismissed from the Commission of the Peace. Lord Clarendon was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland at the time, and Lord Stanley's speech in vindication of Lord Roden was, of course, an attack upon him. The speech, in point of argument and clearness of reasoning, is one of his ablest, and put the Government completely in the wrong. The same session was distinguished also by the great Pacifico debate, when Lord Stanley, on the 17th of June, kept the House in a roar by his description of Don Pacifico's menage, especially his bed-room furniture, for which he claimed compensation.

Early in the following year, on Mr. Disraeli's motion on Agricultural Distress, the Government only got a majority of fourteen in a full house. On Locke King's motion on the County Franchise they were beaten by two to one, and then, February 21, Lord John Russell immediately resigned. It was thought, however, that he had "ridden for a fall"—being anxious to escape from the difficulties into which the Government had plunged themselves by their attitude towards the Papal aggression. The Queen sent for Lord Aberdeen, who was unable to form a Ministry, and then for Lord Derby, who undertook to attempt it. He offered the Foreign Office first to Lord Aberdeen, and afterwards to Lord Canning. But they both declined. He then made the same offer to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, who accepted it. Finding, however, that he could not secure the services of Mr. Gladstone, and

that some Conservative members whom he invited to take office were frightened at their own shadows, he gave up the attempt, and Lord John Russell returned to his place. At this time Mr. Disraeli was willing to have relinquished the lead of the House of Commons to Mr. Gladstone. But this gentleman was afraid of Protection, and perhaps even then may have had some reluctance to sit in the Cabinet with Sir Robert Peel's bitterest assailant. Lord Stanley was not of opinion at this time that the country had spoken its last word on Protection, and in his explanatory speech in the House of Lords, February 28th, 1851, he stated that had he succeeded in forming a Government he should have been prepared to impose a moderate duty upon imports—in other words, a five-shilling fixed duty. The prevailing agricultural distress was very severe, and pending another appeal to the people, *by whose decision he should certainly be guided*, he should have tried the intermediate remedy. It is important to remember the words which are printed in italics, in connection with what is to follow.

In June 1851 Lord Derby's father died, and he succeeded to the earldom, and to the name by which he is best known to all men under fifty years of age. In the following spring Lord John Russell, having again resigned in consequence of Lord Palmerston's Resolution on the Militia, Lord Derby's fate came upon him, and the first Derby administration was formed. On this occasion he made overtures both to Lord Palmerston and Mr. Gladstone, but without success; and was compelled to form a Cabinet of new men, in whose capacity he had evidently little confidence. So little, indeed, did he understand the stuff of which the Tory Party was made, that when Mr.

Disraeli submitted to him a list of members of the House of Commons competent to conduct departments, of several among them he had never even heard the names. However, he soon began to know them better, and spoke of his "young team" and his "raw troops" with some hopefulness. He would allow no one to chaff them but himself; and once, when a well-known Marchioness, a very clever and very bitter politician, tried it on with him, she received an answer which silenced her curiosity pretty promptly. "Come now, Lord Derby," she said, "who are all these people you have got round you? Who are so-and-so—and so-and-so? What is so-and-so? What is he? Is he a real man, or only a puppet?" "As to whether he is a real man or not," said Lord Derby, "I can only assure your Ladyship that he has had three wives, and——" Her ladyship did not wait to hear the rest.

The Ministry was ultimately formed as follows:—

<i>First Lord of the Treasury...</i>	...	THE EARL OF DERBY.
<i>Lord Chancellor</i>	...	LORD ST. LEONARDS.
<i>Home Secretary</i>	...	MR. WALPOLE.
<i>Foreign Secretary</i>	...	EARL OF MALMESBURY.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty</i>	...	DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND.
<i>Secretary at War</i>	...	MAJOR BERESFORD.
<i>Colonial Secretary</i>	...	SIR JOHN PAKINGTON.
<i>Privy Seal</i>	...	MARQUIS OF SALISBURY.
<i>Lord Lieutenant of Ireland...</i>	...	EARL OF EGLINGTON.
<i>Attorney-General</i>	...	SIR FREDERICK THESIGER
<i>Solicitor-General</i>	...	SIR FITZROY KELLY.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer</i>	...	MR. DISRAELI.
<i>President of the Council</i> ...	...	EARL OF LONSDALE.
<i>President of the Board of Trade</i>	...	MR. HENLEY.
<i>President of the Board of Control</i> ...	...	MR. HERRIES.
<i>First Commissioner of Works</i>	...	LORD J. MANNERS.
<i>Postmaster-General</i>	...	EARL OF HARDWICKE.

In Lord Derby's speech to the House of Lords he made use of the memorable expression that it was part of the mission of a Conservative Government to "stem the tide of democracy," which drew down on him considerable censure at the time from the Liberal Party; and more particularly from Mr. Lowe, who some years afterwards reproached him with equal acerbity for not stemming it. How many Liberals at the present day must wish that he had been able to do so!

The new Ministry took their seats on the 27th of February, but it was understood that a dissolution of Parliament would take place in the summer, by which the fate of the new Government would be decided, and that in the meantime the Opposition should hold its hand.

The raw troops, notwithstanding their inexperience, acquitted themselves with credit, and some good Bills were passed, the Militia Bill among the number, while a considerable addition to the strength of the Navy was effected by the Duke of Northumberland. No doubt, when the general election began, the party had raised itself considerably in public estimation. But for one consideration the country would probably have been quite willing to entrust its destinies to their hands. But that one consideration was all important. There was no real reaction against free trade; yet the Government was obliged to go to the country, to some extent, on Protectionist principles. It was known that a Derbyite majority meant a moderate import duty; and the consequence was that Lord Derby just lost the battle, though by a very narrow majority.

When Parliament met in November, Lord Derby and

Mr. Disraeli had a very difficult game to play, the history of which belongs more properly to the life of Lord Beaconsfield. Negotiations were again opened with Palmerston and the Peelites, and on this occasion Gladstone and Mr. Sidney Herbert were willing to join if Lord Palmerston might lead in the House of Commons. But the Queen put her veto on this arrangement, which accordingly fell to the ground ; and Lord Derby had to meet the Opposition attack without any reinforcements. One wise thing he had time to do before the end came, and that was to recognise Louis Napoleon, an act of policy which, had he remained in office, would have saved us the Crimean War. On the 16th of December, however, being defeated on the Budget by a majority of nineteen, Lord Derby at once resigned, and ran down to Knowsley, like a boy escaped from school. He immediately had recourse to his gun, and during a day's rabbit-shooting gave vent to his feelings, as I have heard, in the following characteristic manner:—As a rabbit darted across the ride: “Ha!” he would cry, as he put up his gun, “there goes Gladstone; hope I haven't missed him.” “There, do you see that big fellow? That's Graham—he'll be none the worse for a few pellets in his ribs.” And so on, through the rest. Lord Derby, I am told, was a very “neat” shot, and on each of these occasions he probably peppered the two Peelites pretty heavily.

It was in December 1852 that a letter was addressed to Lord Derby by an “Englishman”—a *nom de plume* well-known to that generation—on “The Morality of Public Men,” rating him in a tone of lofty indignation for his abandonment of Protection, and the shock which it had given to public confidence

in the honesty and sincerity of statesmen. I have stated, a few pages back, that Lord Derby had pledged himself to abide by the verdict of the country, whatever that might be; clearly implying that if the Protectionists were unable to win their own battle at the next general election, they must not expect the Government to persevere in a hopeless and useless contest. Lord Derby went to the country upon that understanding. If he obtained a sufficiently large majority to show that the country was really with him he would re-impose a moderate fixed duty upon foreign corn. If not, it was impossible. The farmers knew this perfectly well; and if Lord Derby made any mistake at all, it was in not resigning at once as soon as the result of the general election was known. Protection then would have been quietly dropped without any wranglings or recrimination; whereas, by remaining in office, he was obliged to submit to a formal recantation being extorted from him. He might have known perfectly well that the experiment of relying on the goodness of his measures to disarm opposition, and secure the support of public opinion, could have but one ending, as it had in 1835. And I think, therefore, that if he had at once retired from office as soon as he found that judgment had gone against him on the main question at issue, announcing at the same time that, in consequence of this decision, he should hold himself free for the future to take what course he pleased on the subject of Protection, he would have occupied a stronger as well as a more dignified position.

This is the most that can be said of his conduct in 1852, which was probably largely influenced by Mr. Disraeli, who was never for resigning while a single

chance remained. But even if more could be said, it would not justify the letter I have quoted. That, only a year after the death of Sir Robert Peel, with all the Conservative seceders whom he had persuaded to abandon their principles while the country was still with them visible in their places, anyone should have had the audacity to try to fasten a charge of tergiversation on Lord Derby, who fought his ship to the water's edge, and only hauled down his flag when the country declared against him, is truly marvellous. But the Peelites, both then and ever since, have been "chartered libertines."

The debates on the Canada clergy reserves in 1853 gave rise to a scene between the Bishop of Oxford and Lord Derby which was much talked of at the time, and for which a good deal of righteous indignation was wasted on Lord Derby. The Bill was brought in by Lord Aberdeen's Government to transfer to the Colonial Legislature the power of dealing with the clergy reserves, or waste lands set apart for the maintenance of the Church of England. Lord Derby moved an amendment, on going into committee on the 25th of April 1853, in the shape of a compromise protecting vested interests. The Bishop of Oxford, who spoke in favour of the Bill, quoted a passage from Burke, which seemed to reflect some imputation of "chicanery" on Lord Derby himself. Lord Derby was very indignant, and the Bishop of Oxford, rising to explain, said that "when he made the quotation he did so with a smile." Lord Derby accepted the explanation of the right reverend prelate, adding, however, "But when he tells me it is impossible for him to say anything offensive because he has a smiling face, he will forgive me if I quote in his presence from

a well-known author without intending in the least to apply the words to him—

A man may smile and smile and be a villain."

The Ministerial Benches groaned. Lord Derby could not conceive that he had said anything offensive. Lord Clarendon said it was offensive to him. Lord Derby said he had not intended to call the Bishop of Oxford a villain, and thought Lord Clarendon had better reserve his indignation till he was attacked himself, when he would perhaps want it all. There the matter dropped for the present. But the Bishop was the aggressor, and at all events it was six of one and half a dozen of the other. If Wilberforce chose to say he was only joking, so might Stanley. But the fact is, the Bishop of Oxford himself was not in the least degree offended. And Lord Derby, meeting him soon afterwards, said he was glad to see that he, at all events, knew how to take a joke.

In June 1853 Lord Derby was installed as Chancellor of the University of Oxford, when several copies of complimentary Latin verses were recited in his honour. Others there were, however, which were the reverse of complimentary, a set of sapphics, in particular, by Mr. Charles Neate, a fellow of Oriel, who attacked Lord Derby in terms of the most foolish and extravagant abuse. They were published in the *Times*, and attracted some attention at the moment; but they have no particular merit, and are only worth a reference in illustration of the reckless falsehoods into which the party zeal of certain superior persons occasionally hurried them. The picture drawn of Bishop Wilberforce as an innocent lamb is too absurd.

Nec magis palmam meruit decoram
Sævus in mitem nimiumque vincens
Dulce ridentem Samuelis iram
Cote cruentâ.

Nobody was better able to take care of himself; and nobody more prone to say bitter things of his opponents.

This installation was memorable for both a Latin speech and an English speech, of which the former was said by the Vice-Chancellor to convey a very favourable impression of Lord Derby's Latinity, while the latter was said in the *Times* to be the best description of the functions of a university, combined with the aptest criticism of the Greek and Latin classics which the writer had ever heard of.

But, with all his respect and veneration for the studies of mathematics and classics, he could not close his eyes to the fact that the object of this great University was not alone to educate authors, poets, or statesmen, but to send forth her sons armed at all points to meet the various discipline of the world, each in his own several profession carrying with him some common resemblance arising from the common stock, yet furnished with different arms to meet the exigencies of the future. In the present day the study of modern languages and the study of modern history, the study of the laws of this and of other countries, and the laws of physical sciences were obtaining great and growing influences and becoming of great and growing importance. They therefore deserved more and more the attentive consideration of a University which desired to send forth her sons furnished at all points and not confined to one or two professions. He rejoiced to see new schools established in which those studies were made a matter of competition, and the elements from which academical honours might be obtained. He confessed (he spoke with great humility) that in a University especially devoted to the service of the Church of England he should himself have rejoiced to see a separate—even for the younger members of the University—school of theology, in which those might study who intended to devote themselves to the service of the Church. For although it was true that ample provision had been made for the teaching of divinity through the instrumentality of able and eminent professors, yet he was afraid it would be found that no study would be really and

anxiously attended to by an undergraduate desirous of distinction unless that study directly, not indirectly, led to practical eminence and the recognition of University distinction at the period of examination. He was desirous of impressing upon those whom he then had the honour of addressing, and especially on those who were connected with the government of that University, that if they wished to maintain, as he did most fervently, their institutions upon their ancient foundations, and the original structure of this University unimpaired and untouched, it was of importance that they should not linger behind the reasonable requirements of the age, and while they did not yield to clamour or consent to abandon their own real and fixed opinions, that they should endeavour as widely as possible to extend the discipline and the teaching of the University, so as to make it more and more generally applicable to every class and every description of Her Majesty's subjects, being members of the Church of England.

The second passage so admired by the *Times* was as follows :—

The noble simplicity of Homer and Herodotus; the classic elegance of Virgil; the sublime reasonings of Plato; the dignity, power, and pathos of the Greek tragedian; the graphic accuracy of Thucydides; the easy, unaffected narrative of Xenophon; the vigorous terseness of Tacitus; the impassioned eloquence of Demosthenes; the graceful rhythm and pure Latinity of Cicero; the glorious daring of Pindar; the *curiosa felicitas* of Horace; the shrewd homely wit of Terence; the biting sarcasm of Juvenal.

Exceptions might be taken, perhaps, to some of these epithets, but as an unpremeditated after-dinner summary it is very good.

Lord Derby was now once more free from the trammels of office, but he was not free from a great weight of responsibility. He was at the head of a powerful majority in the House of Lords. In the House of Commons Mr. Disraeli was now the recognised leader of a formidable Opposition nearly three hundred strong. Lord Derby, in his Ministerial explanation in the House of Lords, put it at

three hundred and ten. The death of the Duke of Wellington had removed one of the principal guarantees for the peace of Europe, and it soon became apparent that stormy times were approaching. Little discussion, however, took place in the House of Lords on the Eastern Question during the session of 1853; and when Parliament was prorogued on the 20th of August a hope was still entertained that the conference then sitting at Vienna would be able to find a peaceful solution of it. But all their efforts were in vain, and on the 5th of October the Porte declared war. When Parliament reassembled, in January 1854, the delicate and onerous duty of interrogating the Foreign Secretary and criticising the policy of the Government devolved on Lord Derby, who had to steer between the appearance of factious and vexatious cavil, and the condonation of errors of which undoubtedly the Government had been guilty.

He was compelled to point out that Lord Aberdeen's Government had led the Emperor of Russia to believe, first, that England would never go to war, and, secondly, that she could never become the cordial ally of France. The violence with which the French Government was assailed by the Peelite organs in the press seemed to warrant this belief. But had he never been allowed to cherish these two delusions, Lord Derby was confident that he never would have crossed the Pruth. Had he himself remained in office, Nicholas would not have been betrayed into these fatal misconceptions. Lord Derby, by his prompt recognition of Louis Napoleon, had made him a firm friend of England, and of the Conservative Party, and Russia would have understood the possibility of an *entente cordiale* under a Derby administration. In the second

place, there would have been no peace-at-any-price party in the British Cabinet had Lord Derby's Administration continued, and the Emperor would have had no reason for assuming that England would never draw the sword. We can hardly doubt, therefore, that Mr. Disraeli spoke the literal truth when he said he knew, of his own personal knowledge, that there would have been no Crimean War had Lord Derby remained Prime Minister. Mr. Cobden was of the same opinion ; and it is curious to turn to the peroration of Mr. Gladstone's speech upon the Budget, which is commonly supposed to have turned Lord Derby out, and read his prophecies of what would happen if the Government obtained a majority, and then to remember what actually did happen because they failed to obtain one. "The hideous and heart-rending" scenes of the Crimean winter, the loss of hundreds of thousands of human lives, to say nothing of the conversion of the Income Tax into a fixed and permanent branch of the Imperial revenue, *hinc causas habuere*. Well might Mr. Cobden say that he never looked back on anything with more regret in his life than on the vote which he gave against Lord Derby on that memorable 16th of December.

In the debate on the Address, March 31st, 1854, Lord Derby reviewed the state of the Eastern Question with his customary ability, giving effect to the views above mentioned, and attributing the failure of the Ministerial diplomacy to the necessary impotence of a Cabinet formed on what Lords Grey and Grenville in 1812 called "the principle of counteraction." The Crimean war, in fact, was the direct result of the coalition. Had either Lord Aberdeen or Lord Palmerston been able to do exactly as he liked, we should

have had no war. Lord Aberdeen would have told Turkey that, if she refused the demands of Russia, she must not count on the support of England. Lord Palmerston would have told Russia that, if she enforced her demands on Turkey, she must count on the resistance of England. Either representation would probably have secured peace. But a Cabinet which advanced and retired on alternate days, which at one and the same time encouraged Turkey to resist and Russia to persevere, of course took the most effectual means to set the two Powers by the ears. Had Lord Derby remained in office, the Cabinet would have spoken with one voice and one mind. He, at all events, was not committed to the understanding of 1844, and he would have told the Emperor of Russia, while there was yet time, that England would not permit the execution of her designs against the Porte. That was the phrase that was wanted. Lord Clarendon kept on writing that England "cannot believe" that "Russia will act in such a manner." England "cannot allow" would have produced a very different effect. The Czar began to take England for another Bob Acres, who would simply tell him he was a very ill-bred man, and turn away in another direction.

On the 14th of February Lord Derby spoke again, recapitulating his former charges, but declaring that, as he now believed war to be inevitable, he should discard all considerations of the past, all party feeling and party questions, and give to the Government the best support in his power.

The only other noticeable feature connected with Lord Derby in the Parliamentary session of 1854 was the Universities Bill, in which, as Chancellor of the

University of Oxford, he was expected to take a special interest. I do not know that the Bill suffered from the haste with which it was carried in the Upper House ; but it was often said that Lord Derby “rushed it” through in one night because he was engaged to go to the Liverpool races.

I need not dwell on the mingled glories and calamities of the Crimean war. We all know that, as soon as Parliament reassembled in January 1855, the Coalition Ministry fell amid a storm of indignation ; and although where so many were implicated it was difficult, perhaps, to apportion the responsibility with precise justice, this much was made abundantly evident by the debates in both Houses, namely, that Government had embarked in the contest without counting the cost, or fully comprehending the nature of it. Shutting their eyes obstinately to the magnitude and probable duration of the struggle, Ministers were eager to the last that the despatch of British troops to the Mediterranean should wear the appearance only of “a demonstration” ; and it will be remembered that the addition to the Estimates asked for on account of the Army was stated to be for sending 25,000 men to Malta, and “bringing them back again.” “It was easy,” said Lord Derby, “from this beginning to understand all that followed—why it was that the expedition was totally unprepared for the demands of a campaign, without stoves, without blankets, without even a bottle of wine, which on one occasion would have saved eleven lives.” It was not doubted then, and cannot, I think, be doubted now, that the whole disaster was due to the composition of the Government, consisting of two different parties who thought alike on nothing except the expediency of

turning out Lord Derby in 1852, and of which one section was all along working and scheming and contriving against the policy of the other. What else could be expected?

It seems strange that Lord Derby, who, in his speech on the Address, January 31st, 1855, went to the root of the matter, and showed that he clearly understood the primary cause of all our troubles, should have stopped short at the inference which it naturally suggested. Yet, so he did. When requested by the Queen to undertake the formation of a government, he told Her Majesty that his efforts must depend on his being able to secure the assistance of Lord Palmerston, and some members of the Peelite party. Receiving Her Majesty's permission to make overtures to the late Home Secretary, Lord Derby was met by him at first in a very cordial spirit. Mr. Disraeli had consented again to waive the leadership of the House of Commons; and Lord Palmerston left Lord Derby in the middle of the day with what amounted to an assurance that he would certainly join him if Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Sidney Herbert could be prevailed upon to do the same; he undertaking to see these gentlemen that afternoon. What was Lord Derby's surprise, then, to receive a note that evening, while he was seated at dinner, in which Lord Palmerston declared that, on second thoughts, he did not see his way to joining him, but containing no allusion to either Mr. Herbert or Mr. Gladstone. Still greater was his surprise on hearing from these statesmen, when they wrote in a very friendly way to decline his offer, that Lord Palmerston had said nothing to them about his own willingness to accept it, but, on the contrary, had stated that he had no in-

tention of doing so. Lord Derby at once informed the Queen that the negotiations were at an end, and that he could not undertake to form a Ministry out of his own party alone.

Two interesting questions arise out of this little history : first of all, what was at the bottom of Lord Palmerston's behaviour? and, secondly, why did Lord Derby shrink from renewing the experiment of 1852? Of the former, more than one explanation has been given. The more generally accepted one is that during the interval between his seeing Lord Derby and his seeing Mr. Gladstone, it had been pointed out to Lord Palmerston that if he only held aloof, the ball would roll to his feet; that the public voice demanded him; and that the then omnipotent *Times* declared him to be the only man. Others have maintained that an influence more powerful still was at work in the background—not, indeed, in favour of Lord Palmerston, but against Lord Derby. If this explanation is correct, it may have been thought that by shelving Lord Derby, the way would be smoothed for the return to power of a reconstructed Peelite administration. The Prince Consort had nothing in common with either Lord Derby or Lord Palmerston—they were types of men which he did not appreciate—but if he had been obliged to choose, he would probably have preferred the former, who, at all events, had given no offence to the Court, either by his policy or his conduct. But it was probably believed that Lord Palmerston would be just as unable to form a government as Lord Derby, and that, in that case, the prize would come back again to Lord Aberdeen. If Prince Albert did think this, it only shows that he did not even then understand either the English

people or the House of Commons. But I think, myself, that the other explanation I have given is the more probable of the two, as one scarcely sees how the second hypothesis can be made to square with the facts. The Court could have said nothing to Lord Palmerston; and if anything had been said to the other two gentlemen mentioned, which seems highly improbable, this could not have influenced Lord Palmerston, who had changed his mind before he saw either of them. Lord Derby might certainly have said to Lord Palmerston—"They will not keep me out, to bring you in." But Lord Palmerston's real adviser was probably his wife.

Lord Derby, without doubt, was not the Court candidate. The Court's idea of an administration was a Cabinet of clever men, comparatively unconnected with party, and on foreign affairs taking their instructions from the Crown. Now, the Peelites, more nearly than any other set of English statesmen, answered to this description. They were detached at this moment from all party ties; they were men of proved ability; and they were not too aristocratic. The Prince either could not or would not understand the working of the English party system, or see that such a government could hardly have held its own in the House of Commons for a single Session. He thought the Crown ought to exercise more direct power; and he, too, was anxious to form "a third party," through whose instrumentality such a system might be established. He disliked the Whigs as anti-monarchical, and the Conservatives as representing more particularly that territorial aristocracy which is peculiar to England, and whose feudal traditions and local authority and jurisdiction

were wholly uncongenial to him. There is no fault to be found with Prince Albert—but very much the reverse—for wishing to see the Crown a reality ; nor is it much to be wondered at that he had not sufficiently mastered that wonderful machine, the British Constitution, to understand that the days of the King's friends were gone never to return.

I give these reports as part of the history of the time, and as they are intimately connected with Lord Derby. But I do not believe that Prince Albert took any active part either for or against Lord Derby, while it is well known that nothing can exceed the thorough straightforwardness and strict constitutional propriety which have been invariably exhibited by Her Majesty in all her transactions with political parties and rival statesmen.

That Lord Derby, when his applications to Lord Palmerston and Mr. Gladstone failed, declined to form a Government exclusively from his own adherents, was creditable to his sense of duty, but not to his political sagacity. He saw that the one necessity of the period was a strong Government, and he honestly believed that he should not have been able to construct one. But the reasons which he gave for thinking so are utterly inconclusive. They are to be found expressed with all his usual clearness in the “ explanation ” which he gave to the House of Lords on the 7th of February 1855. Referring to 1852, he said he had no reason to doubt that the tactics employed against him then would have been resorted to a second time had he taken office a second time in a minority ; and that the discordant sections of the Opposition would have made up their differences and combined to turn him out at the first favourable

opportunity. In 1852 his party in the House of Commons numbered three hundred; now they were only two hundred and eighty, and still less able to make head against a coalition. He drew a picture of the position of a weak Government, which may compare with Mr. Disraeli's famous one in 1873; and he would not, he said, at such a moment, expose either himself, his party, or the public to a repetition of what had happened only three years before.

But Lord Derby omitted to notice several most important differences between the two situations. In 1852 the coalition promised to be a great success. In 1855 it stood before the nation a condemned criminal. It had been tried and found miserably wanting. No one had shown more clearly than Lord Derby himself that the disasters in the Crimea were mainly due to the vicious principle on which it was constructed. The people understood that by placing Lord Derby in a minority and enabling the Coalition to defeat him, they had brought these disasters on themselves. Yet Lord Derby, while laying down these premisses with the greatest clearness, shut his eyes to the irresistible conclusion that the people would not do so again. They had found out their mistake, and were not very likely to repeat it. In 1855 he would have been taking office at a great national emergency: to carry on a great war which had been grievously mismanaged by his predecessors, and to extricate the country from difficulties not of his own creation. England always rallies round a Government placed in such circumstances as these, and the public would have had little sympathy with any such tactics as Lord Derby professed to be afraid of. But, even if they had been attempted, Lord Derby in 1855 had a

dissolution before him, while in 1852 it was behind him. He could not appeal to the country from the coalition formed against him in a newly-elected House of Commons. But in 1855 his reply to any successful combination was clear; he would at once have dissolved, and in all probability have obtained a triumphant majority. He would have had a very strong man in the place where strength was most wanted—that is in the War Department, which was to have been filled by Lord Ellenborough. Can anyone suppose that England at that time would have rejected such a Government to restore the coalition or any part of the coalition? And that would have been the alternative. Lord Derby could only have been defeated in the House of Commons by another coalition, and the country, at a general election, would have had to choose between the two. His decision on this occasion was the great mistake of his life.

It should also be borne in mind that the proposed reunion with the Peelites, which was such a favourite idea with Lord Derby, would not necessarily have resulted in a really strong Government, even had it been accomplished. It was very unpopular with the rank and file of the Conservative Party. Even in 1855 more than eighty Conservative members threatened to secede if anything of the kind were done, and in 1857 the mere report of their coalition with the Peelites cost the party several seats at the general election. Here again Lord Derby showed that he did not altogether understand the country gentlemen. At a meeting of his party on the 20th of February, he declared that he would not be dictated to in regard to any political personages with whom he might choose to combine. But though he was loudly cheered by those

present, there was many an old parsonage and manor house in which distrust of the Peelites was ineradicable.

It may be remembered that this winter was an exceptionally hard one, the snow lying on the ground from the beginning of January to the second week in March, and as soon as he had made his explanation in the House of Lords, and Lord Granville had moved the adjournment of the House for another week, Lord Derby rushed away to his friend, Lord Malmesbury, at Heron Court to enjoy the capital wild-fowl shooting to be had in such weather on the Avon. He threw himself into the sport with all the zest of sixteen, and as if coalitions and Crimeas and Whigs and Peelites belonged to a previous state of existence. One day he was much delighted at killing six white-fronted geese. But "one thing at a time," was his favourite motto, and he had the rare powers of throwing aside one employment, and completely absorbing himself in another at a moment's notice. Lord Malmesbury has seen him on other occasions come in from shooting, to which, as usual, he had given his whole mind, and sit down immediately and write a long despatch full of facts and arguments without any preparation, and without altering a single word before it was sent off.

This was the year of the Vienna Conferences, which Lord John Russell attended as the English plenipotentiary. The famous four points were rejected by Russia, and, of course, the newspapers were ringing with the intelligence. During this week Lord Derby was at Newmarket, which he left to come straight to Heron Court, and Lord Malmesbury records it as highly characteristic of him that when he was told that our proposals had been rejected at Vienna, he at once exclaimed, "What proposals?"

Soon afterwards he supported, in a very able speech, a series of Resolutions moved by Lord Ellenborough in the form of an address to the Crown condemning the conduct of the war, which were negatived by the large majority of a hundred and eighty-one votes to seventy. Lord Derby's speech, however, is chiefly remarkable for some observations on the Heads of Departments, in which, while openly avowing his opinion that Lord Palmerston had not taken them from the most competent men at his disposal, he candidly acknowledged the difficulties in which the Prime Minister was often placed by the exigencies of the Party system. "Outcries had been raised both against aristocracy and routine" (alluding to the Administrative Reform League, and the Circumlocution Office). "Now, routine was the very essence of regular Government, but the real evil was the absence of a master mind to use and apply the machinery." He thought that exaggerated ideas were abroad as to the selection of persons for high office, and he pointed out the restrictions on the choice of the Prime Minister, who must choose trained men from his own party, and of Parliamentary experience, the number of whom eligible for office "was greatly diminished by the Reform Bill." This is a very important admission, coming from one of the prime supporters of the Reform Bill, and should be borne in mind oftener than it is.

With the year 1856 came the discussion of the Peace of Paris, and what were called the Clarendon Capitulations, which Lord Derby attacked with great energy. Appended to the Treaty was a declaration on the subject of our maritime rights, to the following effect :—(1) Privateering is and remains abolished.

(2) The neutral flag covers enemies' goods, except contraband of war. (3) Neutral goods, except contraband of war, are not liable to capture under an enemy's flag. Lord Derby thought the whole treaty provided very inadequate securities against Russian aggression, and events have shown that he was right. But he was specially indignant with the surrender of our maritime rights, and he complained particularly that "our birthright had been given away in the dark." The speech was delivered on the 5th of May, and from the tone of it we should suppose that Lord Derby contemplated recurring to the subject on some future occasion. But if so, he abandoned his intention, and the subject was allowed to drop.

We were scarcely, however, out of one war before we were on the brink of another. But Lord Derby did not take any prominent part in the discussion of the Central American difficulty, nor of the dismissal of Mr. Crampton on the charge of violating the neutrality laws of the United States by recruiting there for the British Foreign Legion. But on the great constitutional question of the year, that, namely, of Life Peerages, he displayed all his eloquence and debating power. It had been proposed by the Government to confer a life peerage on Mr. Baron Parke, with the title of Lord Wensleydale. Lord Lyndhurst moved that the question should be referred to a committee of privileges, and carried his motion against the Government by a majority of thirty-three. Lord Derby spoke late in the debate, and those who heard him will never forget the air with which he drew himself up, and declared that, standing there as the fourteenth Earl of Derby in hereditary succession, he would never consent to see

the independence of the House of Lords swamped. His argument was the obvious one—that life peerages would hold out a temptation to an unscrupulous minister to swamp the House of Lords, which hereditary peerages would not, and I think it is certain that they would. The argument on the other side was simply the argument of the Athenians against the probability of Philip of Macedon attacking them. They granted the power—*ἀλλ' ὃ πάν ουχί βουλήσεται*—was their stock reply when urged to increase their armaments. That Lord Derby was quite right in his estimate of the danger, is, I think, pretty generally allowed, and in any future scheme for the reform of the House of Lords, the simple undiluted expedient of life peerages is not likely to be proposed.

The Party reassembled in the following Session not in very good spirits. The refusal of office in 1855 had greatly disheartened them. In the Session of 1856 there was nothing to fight about, and in December of that year Lord Derby wrote a characteristic letter to Lord Malmesbury, in reply to one which he had received a week before on the disorganization of the party, saying that he and Lord Lichfield had been too busy shooting to attend to politics, but that he would join Lord Malmesbury at Hatfield, and talk the matter over with him quietly. He still thought that all the mischief was owing to the part played by the Peelites in 1852-3. But their hatred of Disraeli was unrelenting. He was not only the assailant of Peel, but the successor. He had found the Conservatives a leader in the House of Commons, which had never been expected, and cut out the Peelites altogether.

The year 1857 brought the famous Chinese debate,

the Divorce Bill, and the Indian Mutiny. The Chinese authorities at Canton having boarded a vessel named the *Arrow*, in pursuit of some notorious pirates, and carried them away prisoners, it was asserted that the *Arrow* was under the British flag, and technically a British vessel. Sir John Bowring, therefore, called on the Chinese to give up the men, and, when they refused, bombarded the town. He was backed up by Lord Palmerston, whose conduct was made the subject of a hostile motion in both Houses of Parliament. It was moved by Mr. Cobden in the Commons, and carried by a majority of sixteen, and by Lord Derby in the House of Lords, where it was defeated by a majority of thirty-six. But Lord Derby made one of his best speeches on the occasion, showing himself a complete master of what was a very complicated question, and speaking as if he had thought of nothing else for weeks. When the debate was over he linked his arm with that of another noble lord and walked out of the House in earnest conversation on the next "Two Thousand," China and the lorcha being cast aside in a single moment as soon as what was necessary had been done.

But he made even a better speech than this on the 16th of March following, just before the general election, when he took the occasion offered by the second reading of the Income Tax Bill to review the Government and Lord Palmerston's policy as a whole, and the speech is very interesting, because in it he discloses his opinions on questions of great importance on which I do not think he ever spoke publicly at any other time.

Now, I have adverted to one subject which was introduced rather gratuitously at the time. I mean the ecclesiastical appointments of

the noble Viscount. That question, I know, has been, and will be, put prominently forward with regard to the coming elections. I am quite aware of the delicacy of treating a question of this kind, and more especially at the present time. Nevertheless, I will frankly state my opinion on a question which has excited, and continues to excite, a great deal of public consideration. I trust I shall be able so to express myself with reference to it as to give no offence to any human being, and least of all is it my desire to say one word in derogation of those Prelates who, from an unusually rapid succession of vacancies upon the Bench, have been appointed to their present offices upon the recommendation of the noble Viscount. I have not the honour of a personal acquaintance with any of those right reverend Prelates; but I know with regard to some, and I am willing to believe with regard to others, that they have been distinguished as men laborious, diligent, earnest and zealous in the sacred profession to which they belong: I know that some of them have been energetic in the discharge of parochial duties in some of the largest parishes, and I am therefore not disposed to say one single word in derogation of the appointment of those right reverend Prelates. But the more they are all such as I am willing to believe they are, the more I think they will be likely to regret the use that is made of their appointments for party purposes—the more must they regret to see, for mere party purposes, their names paraded and put in invidious contrast with those of others of their right rev. brethren, and their appointments praised and lauded, not on account of their personal qualifications, but because they are supposed, rightly or wrongly, to represent one of the extreme sections of the religious parties which unhappily exist in the Church of England. Do not let me be misunderstood. I have no sympathy with what are called Tractarian views, and I conceive that nothing would be more dangerous, nothing more detrimental to the interests of the Church of England, than the preponderance of that party in the Church. But because I entertain these opinions, I am not necessarily therefore to throw myself into the other extreme. I am not necessarily to associate all my sympathies and all my feelings with those who profess a degree of latitudinarianism and pseudo-Liberalism which leads them to fritter away, for the purpose of establishing a wider basis and including a larger number of persons within the folds of the Church, those doctrines which the Reformed Church of England has held to be essential and vital. I have the greatest respect for the labours and the energies and the piety of many of the Dissenters of this country. But, I confess it, my sympathies, my feelings, my affections are with that body of the Established Church—and thank

God they are both numerous and of weight and influence!—who, preferring the religion of the closet to the excitement of the platform, with their Bible for their guide, with the ancient Fathers of the Church, and with the modern lights of the Reformed Church as their commentators and assistants, are more ready to inculcate upon their hearers the practical precepts than the abstruse doctrines of religion; but who, nevertheless, maintaining the bond of unity in the Church, and maintaining it in the spirit of peace, are not prepared, for the sake of a false peace and of a false union, to compliment away any of those which the Church upholds as its fundamental and essential doctrines. My Lords, it is because those are my opinions, and because they are the opinions, I believe, of a very large number of the well-thinking and sound-thinking men of this country, that I regret that Her Majesty's Government should have thrown, or should have appeared to throw (for I will not say that they have thrown), or should be applauded for having appeared to throw the whole weight of their influence and authority into one end of that scale within which the wide latitude of the Church of England allows a diversity of opinion.

Lord Palmerston dissolved Parliament after his defeat in the House of Commons, and obtained a great accession of strength, many of the supporters of Mr. Cobden's motion losing their seats. The loss to the Conservative Party, on the whole, was 26 seats, and when Parliament reassembled they were at a lower ebb than they had been since 1851. Considerable dissatisfaction was the result, and this must be borne in mind when we come to the events of 1858.

During the remainder of the Session Lord Derby did not attend very closely in his place in Parliament. He made an important speech against the second reading of the Ministers' Money Bill, a Bill introduced by Government for abolishing what was called Ministers' money in Ireland, a fixed charge upon property which for two hundred years had been bought and sold liable to this obligation. Lord Derby pointed out the distinction in principle between his own policy

of 1832-3, and such measures as these to the principle of which he had always been constantly opposed. But on a division the second reading was carried by 101 to 96. Lord Derby was opposed to that clause in the Divorce Bill which permitted the parties to marry again; but he did not oppose it in person. Even on the Indian Mutiny he did not speak at any length in the Session of 1857.

CHAPTER VII.

LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY
(CONTINUED).

1858-1865.

The Conspiracy to Murder Bill—Lord Derby's Second Ministry—Ministerial Statement—Foreign Difficulties—The India Bill—Lord Ellenborough's resignation—Progress of the Bill—The Jew Bill—Remainder of the Session—Toxophilite—The Reform Bill—Its proposals—The dissolution—Defeat of the Government—The Italian Blue-Book—Speech on resignation—The Second Palmerston Ministry—Understanding with Lord Palmerston—Reasons for Lord Derby's inaction—Foreign affairs—The "Muzzling" Speech—Attacks on Lord John Russell's diplomacy—The Commercial Treaty—The Paper Duties Bill—Mr. Walpole's Resolution—The Prison Ministers Bill.

WITH the year 1858, another turn of fortune—I am inclined to think it ill fortune—brought Lord Derby into office a second time. On the 14th of January an attempt was made on the life of the French Emperor, the previous conspiracy having been organized in England. In compliance with the representation of the French Government, Lord Palmerston brought in the Conspiracy to Murder Bill, without having returned any suitable answer to Count Walewski's despatch. The result was that the Bill

was thrown out in the House of Commons on the 19th of February by a majority of nineteen. Lord Palmerston resigned, and Lord Derby was summoned to the Palace. He again made overtures to Mr. Gladstone, who was offered the secretaryship of the Colonies, and also to the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Grey; but, as all three declined, Lord Derby had now to construct that Government out of his own party alone, which he would have been in a much better position to construct in 1855. It was formed as follows:—

<i>First Lord of the Treasury...</i>	...	...	...	EARL OF DERBY.
<i>Lord Chancellor ..</i>	...	...	...	LORD CHELMSFORD.
<i>President of the Council ...</i>	...	...	...	MARQUIS OF SALISBURY.
<i>Privy Seal ...</i>	...	...	...	EARL OF HARDWICKE.
<i>Home Secretary ...</i>	...	...	...	MR. WALPOLE.
<i>Foreign Secretary ...</i>	...	...	...	EARL OF MALMESBURY.
<i>Colonial Secretary ...</i>	...	...	...	LORD STANLEY.
<i>Secretary at War ...</i>	...	...	...	COLONEL PEEL.
<i>Chancellor of the Exchequer</i>	...	...	...	MR. DISRAELI.
<i>Board of Control ...</i>	...	...	...	LORD ELLENBOROUGH.
<i>Board of Trade ...</i>	...	...	...	MR. HENLEY.
<i>Duchy of Lancaster ...</i>	...	...	...	DUKE OF MONTROSE.
<i>Postmaster-General ...</i>	...	...	...	LORD COLCHESTER.
<i>First Lord of the Admiralty</i>	...	...	...	SIR J. PAKINGTON.
<i>Lord Lieutenant of Ireland</i>	...	...	...	EARL OF EGLINTON.
<i>Chief Secretary for Ireland</i>	...	...	...	LORD NAAS.
<i>Woods and Forests ...</i>	...	...	...	LORD JOHN MANNERS.
<i>Attorney-General ...</i>	...	...	...	SIR FITZROY KELLY.
<i>Solicitor-General ...</i>	...	...	...	SIR HUGH CAIRNS.

His ministerial statement in the House of Lords is a regular party manifesto, and well worth reading for its eloquence, as well as for the ground which it covers. Lord Derby referred to his attempt to form a Government on a broad basis as follows:—

Parliament, and the public opinion which Parliament represents, are no longer divided by the broad lines of demarcation to which we were formerly accustomed, but they are separated by vast numbers

of small gradations which it is scarcely possible strictly to define. Persons call themselves now-a-days by so many different names—Tories, Conservatives, Liberal-Conservatives, Whigs, Liberals, and Radicals—and such are the niceties of distinction between some of these names that I believe there are no inconsiderable number of Members in the House of Commons, and perhaps in your Lordships' House, too, who would find it difficult to say with which of all these they have the closest sympathy. The state of parties is very like the distinctions of the various grades of ranks in society at large. There is a broad interval between the highest and the lowest, but the gradation by which one melts into the other is so imperceptible that it is difficult with regard to social rank and to political parties in the State precisely to say where one commences and the other ends. But I did think that, desiring to form a Government upon a basis which should be Conservative in the truest sense of the word, but at the same time not indisposed to measures of progressive improvement, I might hope to obtain the assistance of some eminent persons who, not belonging to the Government which we have succeeded, shared to such a degree the opinions of the Conservative party that they might not be deemed guilty of any inconsistency in associating themselves with me in the difficult task which I had undertaken. Thus thinking, I applied to a right hon. gentleman and to two noble lords, members of your Lordships' House, who I conceived might not be indisposed to render me their assistance in framing such a Government as I have described. They did not, however, deem it consistent with their position to afford me such aid. I cannot, of course, find the smallest fault with their decision, but although I must undoubtedly regret that I have been deprived of the benefit of their assistance, I cannot regret that I made such an offer.

On the subject of Reform, he said : —

My Lords, there can be no greater mistake than to suppose that a Conservative policy is necessarily of a stationary character. We live in an age of constant progress—moral, social, and political. We live in a time when art and science are making rapid strides, when knowledge is more and more widely diffused. Our Constitution itself is the result of a series of perpetual changes. Like the venerable old country houses of England, it has been formed from time to time by successive occupants, with no great regard to architectural uniformity or regularity of outline, but adding a window here, throwing out a gable there, and making some fresh accommodation in another place, as might appear to suit, not the external structure, but, what is of more importance, the convenience and comfort of the inhabitants.

My Lords, in politics as in everything else, the same course must be pursued—constant progress, improving upon the old system, adapting our institutions to the altered purposes which they are intended to serve, and by judicious changes meeting the increased demands of society.

He concluded by stating that Government would probably take up the question of the Representation, and be prepared with some measure on the subject in the ensuing session.

Lord Derby on taking office for the second time found upon his hands the Indian Mutiny, the question of the future Government of India, and two foreign difficulties of some magnitude, which he was in a better position to solve than the preceding Government. Besides these, there was, of course, the temporary misunderstanding with France to be surmounted, arising out of Count Walewski's despatch, which was thought too peremptory and dictatorial. The French Government at once declared, in answer to Lord Malmesbury, that the despatch was not intended to convey any such impression; and the Emperor personally expressed his regret for the language of the French colonels. The other two questions concerned the Neapolitan and American Governments. A Neapolitan ship-of-war had, in June 1857, seized a Sardinian mail steamer, the *Cagliari*, with two English engineers on board, who remained in prison till Lord Derby's administration was formed. Lord Palmerston's Government had failed to obtain their release, and was thought to have exhibited some want of energy in demanding it. Lord Derby and Lord Malmesbury addressed themselves to the difficulty at once in a very different tone, with the result that in the month of June they were able to announce the

unconditional release of the two men with £3,000 compensation. The spirit and promptitude which Lord Derby had exhibited in the affair gained him great credit with the country. Our dispute with the American Government arose out of the right of search exercised by British cruisers engaged in the suppression of the Slave Trade. But there was no substantial difference of opinion on the subject between the two parties in Parliament, and the difficulty was adjusted without any rupture with the United States, which at one time, however, appeared imminent.

The India Bill, of course, was the great event of the Session; but before the Bill was introduced, which finally became law, an incident occurred which nearly wrecked Lord Derby's Cabinet on the threshold of its existence. Early in May, by some accident or blunder, a Proclamation addressed by Lord Canning to the landowners of Oude, holding out the penalty of confiscation to all who did not return to their allegiance within a given date, fell into the hands of members of the Opposition, which led, of course, to Lord Ellenborough's reply to it being also laid before Parliament. The despatch conveyed entire disapproval of the Proclamation; and Lord Canning's friends at home were at once in arms against the Government. What followed is too well known to be repeated here. It soon became known that Sir James Outram and other great Indian authorities entirely agreed with Lord Ellenborough. "The crack failed." Lord Shaftesbury's vote of censure in the Lords was defeated by a majority of nine, after an able speech from Lord Derby; and Mr. Cardwell's resolutions were withdrawn in the House of Commons amid a scene humorously described by Mr. Disraeli in his famous

Slough speech, which, according to Lord Derby, who was present in the House of Commons that night, was as true as it was witty.

Lord Ellenborough, however, had resigned his office before the debate began, and was succeeded by Lord Stanley, who, in carrying the India Bill through the House of Commons, gave the first indication of that great Parliamentary ability which his subsequent career confirmed. The second reading was moved by Lord Derby in the House of Lords on the 15th of July, whose speech on the occasion derives a special interest from its connection with the debates of 1878 on the bringing of Indian troops to Malta. By the 55th clause it was enacted that Indian troops should not be employed outside the frontiers. "Except in case of actual invasion of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, the revenues of India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of such possessions by Her Majesty's forces charged upon such revenues." The clause was objected to by the Whigs because it limited the prerogative, and was therefore unconstitutional. But Lord Derby explained that the object of it was not to limit the power of the Crown, but to protect the revenues of India. "It was erroneous to suppose that this clause was intended to prevent Indian troops from being employed on foreign service. They might be employed in any quarter of the globe for which, by the terms of their enlistment, they were eligible." But then they must be paid for by the Imperial Parliament. As Mr. Gladstone said on a subsequent occasion, no Minister would hesitate to

employ such troops when the safety of the State demanded it, and come to Parliament for an indemnity afterwards. It is curious that the most strenuous opponents of this clause, on the ground of its interference with the prerogative, were the Whig statesmen Sir G. C. Lewis and Lord Granville. The Court was displeased at the administration of the Indian Army being given to the Secretary and Council instead of the Horse Guards, and pressed Lord Derby to procure the repeal of these clauses. But he declared himself totally unable to comply with Her Majesty's request, as he was quite sure the House of Commons would never part with these provisions, and it was impossible to transfer the authority to the Horse Guards by any other means than by an Act of Parliament.

In the same Session Lord Derby practically withdrew his objection to the admission of Jews to Parliament, by consenting to a compromise proposed by Lord Lucan, empowering either House to modify the form of oath by resolution. Lord Derby treated the Jewish disabilities as Sir Robert Peel had treated the Roman Catholic disabilities. While adhering to his original opinions on the subject of emancipation, Sir Robert Peel declared that his consent to it was wrung from him by circumstances; that it had now, in fact, become the lesser of two evils, and that it was the duty of a practical statesman, who was also a Minister of the Crown, to recognise the fact. Lord Derby in 1858 spoke to much the same effect:—

I confess, my Lords, that I have not altered my views in regard to the policy or expediency of admitting the Jews as members of a Christian Legislature, but, having carefully and anxiously considered the subject, I see that the proposal of my noble and gallant friend is the only possible solution of the difficulty which has existed for a period of ten years. I see no other practical chance of bringing the

two Houses of Parliament into agreement. The measure proposed by my noble and gallant friend is one that certainly maintains the principle adopted by your Lordships in dealing with the measure. It maintains the dignity of your Lordships' House with regard to that portion of the question which is more immediately subject to your jurisdiction. It maintains the law as it stands at the present moment, but it enables the House of Commons, upon a question that specially relates to persons taking their seats in that House, to dispense with the words which stand in the way of what appears to be the decided wish of the House. This solution appears to me to afford a practical and not unreasonable mode of settling a difficult and complicated question. And however much I regret the determination taken by the House of Commons, and the impossibility of maintaining inviolate the principle for which your Lordships' House has ever contended, I confess I think there is less difficult and less practical inconvenience and danger arising from giving a limited consent to the views of the House of Commons, as embodied in the proposition of my noble and gallant friend, than in persisting in an opposition which all practical experience proves cannot be pushed beyond a certain limit between the two Houses. My Lords, it is with the greatest regret I feel that I may differ upon this question from many of those with whom I have agreed for many years. If upon this occasion those who have honoured me with their confidence find it impossible to adopt the course which I have recommended, I will only say for my own part that, claiming from them that justice which I am ready to give in return, I take the course which I have adopted from no other feeling than a desire to see an amicable settlement between the two Houses with regard to a question of grave interest, and with respect to which I see no other solution.

There is nothing to be added to this. It is the justification of all statesmen placed in similar circumstances under a popular form of government, and represents the only principle on which it is possible for them to serve either the Crown or the country.

The succeeding events of the Session of 1858 were the addition to the Empire of the colony of British Columbia, the abolition of the property qualification for members of the House of Commons, the act for the embankment of the Thames, a Scotch University Bill, and the Irish Encumbered Estates Commission.

Two Bills sent up from the Commons were rejected by the House of Lords, one for the abolition of Church rates, and another for legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister. On the latter Lord Derby did not speak, though he voted in the majority against it. On the former he spoke in his usual style, but suggested towards the close of his speech what no doubt would have been the proper thing to do—"a substitute might be provided by enabling the landowners to effect a voluntary commutation of the rate into a rent-charge on their estates, or to invest an amount of capital sufficient to provide the requisite income for the purpose to which the Church rate was at present applied."

All the spring, however, of 1858, Lord Derby's mind was intent on other thoughts than those which agitate the political arena—

My heart is at Epsom,
My heart is not here,

he might have said on more than one occasion when speaking in the House of Lords, for it was generally understood that this year he was to add to his political laurels the blue riband of the turf. The Derby was run this year on Wednesday, May 19th, in the middle of the debate on Lord Ellenborough's despatch. Toxopholite was first favourite, and a wonderful amount of public interest was centred in the race. It was known that Lord Derby looked forward to the "double event"—succeeding to the Government, that is, and winning the Derby in the same year—with intense eagerness, and even many of his political opponents hoped he might succeed. Thousands of his supporters who were not sportsmen took the liveliest interest in

the result ; and when "Tox" was only placed second to Sir Joseph Hawley's Beadsman, it might be said almost that the nation sympathised with his disappointment. He was doomed to be disappointed a second time, however, for the horse only ran fourth for the St. Leger ; though he won the Doncaster Stakes at the same meeting, after which he was sold to Lord Glasgow for three thousand pounds.

Lord Derby's Government had the credit of trampling out the Indian Mutiny, as Lord Palmerston's had of terminating the Russian war ; and with the following year, 1859, came a fresh growth of responsibility on the Italian question, and the rupture between France and Austria. I may also refer, in passing, to the affair of the *Charles et Georges*, a French vessel impounded as a slaver by the Portuguese governor of Mozambique, and to the accusation brought against Lord Derby that he had not supported our old ally, Portugal, with sufficient firmness. But the Papers, which were soon after published, completely acquitted the Government of all delinquency in this matter.

At the same time his Chancellor of the Exchequer was engaged in conducting the second reading of a Reform Bill which Lord Derby, again as the lesser of two evils, felt himself bound to introduce. He himself, like other members of his party, would have preferred to leave the settlement of 1832 untouched. Neither he nor any of the Whig patricians of that era had the slightest intention of letting power out of the hands of their own order. They had the wisdom to see that the decayed village boroughs could not long be preserved ; and they determined that, as they must be abolished, the Whigs should

have the credit of abolishing them. But they evidently believed that enough nomination boroughs were preserved in Schedule B to secure the ascendancy of the aristocracy; and, combined with the Chandos clause for the counties, these might for a long time have enabled the old governing class in this country to "stem the tide of democracy," if they could only have let well alone.

But now comes the Conservative justification; the Whigs would not let well alone. Unfortunately they did not see that the game of 1832 was not to be played over again without letting loose forces which they would be totally unable to control. It has been said, and I have no doubt with considerable truth of many of the actors in that great drama, that as soon as the Whigs discovered George the Fourth to be a Tory, from that moment they themselves became Reformers. They had other reasons, as I have just indicated. But no doubt the idea of using Parliamentary reform as a means of regaining that political position from which otherwise they seemed permanently excluded, had considerable weight with them. Now what occurred after 1820 occurred also after 1850. Lord John Russell saw that the Whig party was gradually sinking into insignificance, and he thought to revive its popularity and its importance by putting himself at the head of the reform movement, as he had done in the reign of George the Fourth. As soon as he did this, there was no more peace for Conservatives, whether Whig or Tory. Another Reform Bill became absolutely inevitable; and although events like the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny, and the long train of Continental complications following the Peace of Villa Franca,

blocked the way for a time, and enabled Lord Palmerston to stave it off during his lifetime, the great fact of the veteran Whig leader having recognised the question could never be got over, least of all by a Conservative Government, against which the Whigs had always this weapon in reserve when everything else failed. Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli did well, therefore, not to repeat the error which the Tory Party had committed in 1830, or to take up a *non possumus* attitude on a question which the Whigs were forcing forward, and to which to some extent the Crown stood committed.

But Lord Derby, be it remembered, was no more pledged against reform than Lord John Russell himself. He had helped him to pass the first Reform Bill, and, like him, too, had wished it to be final. If the force of circumstances justified the one in reopening the question, it equally justified the other in attempting to resettle it. The two principal points in the Government measure were the equalisation of the town and county franchise—which cost the Government the services of Mr. Walpole and Mr. Henley—and the provision that a £10 householder in a borough who also owned a 40s. freehold within the boundaries of the same borough should not vote for both the town and the county. As this was the very concession which Lord Grey had been willing to make in 1832, Lord Derby may have thought himself perfectly safe in introducing it. Sir James Graham denied that Lord Grey had been willing to make this concession. But, from Lord Grey's own letters, published in 1867, and from what his son-in-law, Charles Wood, told Greville, I think there can be no doubt of it. This, however, was

before the passage of Lord Lyndhurst's amendment. Afterwards he was not willing. That closed the door to all compromise. The failure to reduce the borough franchise was also a count in the indictment against Ministers, which nobody was more active in magnifying than Mr. Lowe, who eight years afterwards had become an enemy to all change.

Lord John Russell, however, made no reference to this; and, on the cry of "No Disfranchisement," he obtained a majority of thirty-nine against the Government, Mr. Gladstone being one of the minority. He had accepted from Lord Derby, in the previous year, the post of Commissioner to the Ionian Islands, and it was generally supposed that he was only waiting for a favourable opportunity to join the Government. That opportunity, however, seems never to have presented itself.

In his Ministerial statement to the House of Lords before the dissolution of Parliament, Lord Derby, besides giving a sketch of Lord John Russell's career, which almost reminds one in parts of the *De Coronâ* of Demosthenes, uttered some warning words on the conditions, which are as well deserving of attention now as they were thirty years ago.

I have heard it said that the days of Parliamentary Government had come to an end. If by that is meant that the days are gone by when the House of Commons was divided into two distinct parties—within each of which the leaders exercised an undisputed and uncontrolled power over their followers, commanding their votes, and exercising a species of Parliamentary discipline—then, I admit, those days are gone, and are not likely to return. Nor do I think, though there was a great convenience to the public in this sharp separation of parties, that the change has been, on the whole, prejudicial. But, my Lords, if it is meant that henceforth no Government can hope for support, not on individual questions, on which exceptions may occur, but that no Government will hereafter be able to obtain a

permanent majority in the House of Commons strong enough to prevent it being overborne by other conflicting parties, not themselves bound by any common tie, each having its own leaders and its own prospects, if the House of Commons is to be divided into a number of little parties, none capable of exercising a permanent influence on the affairs of the country, but able collectively to thwart the measures and impede the business of the Ministry that has been formed—if, in that sense, government by party is at an end, then I warn your Lordships that the system of Government by Parliament itself will have a very heavy shock to encounter.

The general elections of 1868 and of 1874 did, to some extent, restore and deepen the old party lines ; but since 1880 party has been gradually returning to the state described by Lord Derby in 1859, bringing in its train the very same dangers depicted in the following sentences. A continuous policy, “government upon a system,” is becoming every day more difficult. Lord Derby said :

I am coming now to the close of this long statement, for which I have to apologize to your Lordships, but I wish to show you what is most seriously important, and what may well call for reflection on the part of all those who love the British Constitution, what is infinitely more important than the success of this or that particular measure—infinitely more important than the overthrow or the rise of this or that Ministry—I want to point out the danger to our Parliamentary system arising from these constant changes and fluctuations year by year—not a single year passing without its Ministerial crisis, hardly a year passing without a Ministerial abandonment of office. My Lords, I solemnly declare, if that system is to be persevered in, if that system is permitted by the people of England to be continued, there is an end to all hope of the stability of Government, there is an end to all chance of Government upon a system, there is serious injury done to the political influence of Parliament at home, and there is a serious depreciation of the weight and influence of England in the affairs of Europe.

Lord Derby, in this election, in spite of his having called Rome “the plague spot of Italy,”* received a

* Debate on Address, Feb. 3, 1859. Not in reference to the Pope or the Roman Catholic Church, but to the French and Austrian Armies.

good deal of Roman Catholic support, which, of course, exposed him to the charge of a "compact" with Cardinal Wiseman. But the truth was that the Roman Catholic party, though it had little to hope from Lord Derby, had, as it supposed, a great deal to fear from Lord Palmerston.

A dissolution of Parliament did not bring Lord Derby the majority he was justified in expecting. He gained twenty-nine seats. But this only gave him about three hundred and fifteen regular supporters, if so many, against three hundred and thirty-nine Whigs, Liberals, and Radicals. The result was that on a vote of want of confidence, proposed by the Marquis of Hartington, he was defeated in a House of six hundred and thirty-three members by a majority of thirteen, the numbers being three hundred and twenty-three to three hundred and ten. The result was not due to the Reform Bill. If that had been all, the Conservative Party would have been supported. But the Opposition industriously circulated the charge that Lord Derby had not only failed to keep the peace between Austria and France when he might have done so, but had actually encouraged Austria by expressions of sympathy and goodwill. Austria, at this time, was very unpopular in England. The charge was believed. It was so contrived that the war should break out just as the general elections began. And this utterly false accusation, as it was afterwards admitted to be, lost the Government just the small number of votes which were necessary to turn the scale.

It is well known now that Lord Derby and Lord Malmesbury between them did all that could be done to prevent Austria from going to war; but their

efforts were just as unavailing as were the efforts of Earl Russell's Government in 1866. Events had come to that pass when the sword was the only arbiter; and Lord Malmesbury soon found out that the French had never intended a peaceful solution of the difficulty. Had the Blue-Book containing the correspondence of the Foreign Office with the three Powers been laid on the table of the House of Commons before the division, Lord Derby would have had a majority. Mr. Cobden, and more than a dozen other members of the House of Commons, told Lord Malmesbury they should have voted in favour of Lord Derby had they seen the correspondence, which would have given the Government a majority of twenty-six. But I have been assured by other members of Lord Derby's Administration that less importance was attached to the production of those Papers by the Government generally, than we should suppose from the language of Lord Malmesbury. They might have deferred the evil day for a time. Clever management might have kept the majority at bay for a brief season, but in the end it would have had its way; and even Mr. Disraeli, so eager for office and so reluctant to quit it, did not think the Papers worth waiting for. Lord Malmesbury says that Mr. Disraeli had not read them. Mr. Disraeli told me himself that they were not printed.

Lord Derby immediately resigned. The Queen wrote to him to say how grieved she was at the event, and, adding that she could not part from him without a mark of her favour, gave him the Garter, though there was no vacancy, thus making him an extra knight—an honour usually reserved for crowned heads.

The four speeches of Lord Derby's on Continental affairs during the Session of 1859, which will best repay perusal, are the one delivered on the opening of Parliament, February 3rd, one on the 18th of April, one on the 1st of June, and another on the 17th. In the last he took leave of office in a very dignified manner :

I hardly know whether I ought on the present occasion to pass from the place I now occupy, before making my acknowledgments to Her Majesty for the kindness and confidence with which she has honoured me, and which I at all times experienced from her in the character of First Minister of the Crown. I can only say for myself and my colleagues, and for those in both Houses of Parliament with whom I have the honour of acting, that I am perfectly satisfied that those who will succeed us will meet with no factious opposition in the formation or conduct of the Government. And let me say more, that it will give me most earnest and sincere satisfaction to find that, no longer holding office, I am able to give to them an independent and general support. I also earnestly trust that, in the matter of foreign policy, the Government which is about to be formed will not depart from the line of strict and impartial neutrality. I am satisfied that that is the only course which will accord with the wishes and with the interests, and I may say with the determination of the country, and at the same time that they adhere to the principle of neutrality I trust they will not relax in those efforts which we have felt it our duty to make in the present unsettled state of Europe, to place the country, and more especially the naval force, in a position to protect ourselves against every insult, and add weight and importance to our mediation or negotiations with foreign Powers.

As Lord Derby had acted on the Duke of Wellington's suggestion in 1852, and called out the Militia, so one distinguishing feature of his administration in 1858-9 was the reinforcement of the Navy, and the direction of public attention to the condition of our national defences, a policy that was taken up and carried out by Lord Palmerston in accordance with Lord Derby's recommendations.

Thus ended what for ten years had been the hope of Lord Derby's life, the healing, that is, of the great Conservative schism, and the reunion of the whole body of Sir Robert Peel's followers under one chief, fortified by the accession of one who had never been a Whig and was now a moderate Conservative like himself — Lord Palmerston. Both the Peelites and Lord Palmerston had now made their final choice, and the broad-bottomed Conservative Administration to which Lord Derby had so long looked forward was no more heard of. That Mr. Gladstone himself would have preferred Lord Derby to Lord Palmerston as his political chief is pretty clear from the Life of Bishop Wilberforce; and his refusal to join the former after having approached him so nearly, followed by his alliance with the latter, for whom he was known to entertain feelings very much the reverse of respectful, was thirty years ago one of the great topics of the day.

There are many who think that even if such a union had been effected, it would have enjoyed but a brief existence. I have been told by perfectly independent and impartial witnesses, who had every means of knowing the truth, that Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli could never have sat together in the same Cabinet for two Sessions, while we have already seen that many of the country gentlemen entertained nearly as strong an aversion to Mr. Gladstone as Mr. Gladstone entertained for Mr. Disraeli. But, however it might have turned out, the combination was henceforth out of the question, and Lord Derby felt that he should turn his powerful following in the House of Commons, more than three hundred sabres, to the best account by coming to some understanding with

Lord Palmerston, by which, while the minister should undertake to govern the country on Conservative principles, the Conservatives should undertake to support him against Radical pressure. Lord Derby stipulated for freedom of criticism, but promised to do nothing that would endanger the existence of the Government. Some very interesting letters written from Lord Derby to Lord Malmesbury in the autumn of 1860 relate to this subject. He says: "I think that in your communications with Palmerston you cannot be too explicit. He is a gentleman, and will know that you and I are dealing with him *de bonne foi*, and will not suspect a dodge if we make any exceptions to our promise of support. I should, however, be quite ready to assure him that, though we might in debate object to some of the sayings and doings of the Foreign Office (and chiefly the sayings, or, rather, writings), we should not countenance any movement on the subject of foreign policy calculated to defeat the Government." Politics in these letters are mixed up with many allusions to woodcocks and wild ducks, of which the noble Earl, who was now laid up with the gout, could only hear the reports. Unfortunately, it happened that this year was an unusually good one for cocks at Knowsley, fifty being killed there in three days by two guns.

Thus Lord Derby was willing to do for Lord Palmerston a good deal more than Lord Palmerston would have done for him. And though the policy of the Government did not permit of Lord Derby carrying out his programme quite literally, yet, on the whole, he did so very fairly, and "kept the cripples on their legs," as he expressed it, till the next general election. A counter proposal, said to have emanated

from the Radicals, that they should help him to turn out Lord Palmerston, and keep him in for two years, if it was ever made, was doubtless rejected with contempt.

That in his unwillingness to displace Lord Palmerston, Lord Derby was actuated by a sense of duty as well as by his own love of liberty, it is impossible to doubt. Yet it is not certain that he read the signs of the times quite correctly. He saw clearly enough that the substitution of a Conservative for a Liberal Government would be the signal for the Whig Party at once to blow into a flame more than one dangerous question, which as long as they remained in office would never do more than smoulder. Lord Derby was for leaving well alone; and in favour of this view there was doubtless a good deal to be said. But the worst of it was that it could be only a provisional arrangement, dependent on the life of Lord Palmerston, at whose death or retirement the more Radical section of the party were sure to gain the upper hand, and proceed to carry out those changes to which Lord Derby was sincerely hostile. I believe Mr. Disraeli was of opinion that a Conservative Party which had already been a few years in office, and had shown sufficient administrative ability to acquire the confidence of the nation, would be better placed for resisting the Radical attack than the same party in opposition before their capacity as statesmen had been thoroughly recognised, and when their resistance to the Government would, by a large section of the public, be certainly set down to party spirit and a craving for the sweets of office. Lord Derby, however, seems to have been of a different opinion, and was haunted probably to the last by a lurking doubt whether the Conservative Party had really a sufficient hold upon

the country to play the part of which his colleague deemed it fully capable.

We have also to take into account that during the greater part of that time, and as long as Lord Derby's health and strength were equal to the fatigue of political warfare, the opposite party was led by a statesman who hardly provoked attack. Between Lord Palmerston and Lord Derby there was no real difference of opinion. They had been colleagues in the Tory Government of Mr. Canning, and again in the Whig Government of Lord Grey. Lord Palmerston's motto in domestic politics was *Quieta non movere*, and Lord Derby must have been satisfied that Conservative principles were as safe in his hands as in his own. In fact, something like an informal understanding had been arrived at between them, as stated on a former page. Of course there would be heavy skirmishing at times, and Lord Russell's foreign policy offered irresistible temptations, Lord Derby probably being quite well aware that there were few remarks he could make upon it which would not be secretly endorsed by Lord Russell's chief. In the famous vote of want of confidence in 1862, on the Danish question, Lord Derby after all was only condoling with Lord Palmerston for having been forced to resign his own opinion. Thus the Opposition and the Government, while Lord Derby was at his best, were fighting with buttons on their foils; and after Lord Palmerston's death, when the deluge came, he could no longer bear the weight of his armour, and was obliged, even before he formally retired, to devolve the burden and heat of the day upon younger shoulders.

Henceforth the purely political career of Lord Derby

almost merges in that of Mr. Disraeli. There were no more combinations or coalitions to be negotiated. And Lord Derby's failing health began to indispose him more than ever for the drudgery of party warfare. His attacks of gout now became more frequent and more violent, and it was during one of these, in the year 1862, that he wrote the greater part of his translation of Homer. But he was still good for a field day in the House of Lords, where, at the commencement of every Session, he let himself loose on Lord Russell's foreign policy, to the intense delight of the Conservative peers, and of a great many Liberals as well.

During the whole of Lord Palmerston's administration foreign affairs continued to occupy the largest share of public attention; and the settlement of Italy after the Peace of Villa Franca, the Temporal Power, the cession of Savoy to France, and the question of a united kingdom under the dynasty of Sardinia, afforded him frequent opportunities of speaking with his usual vigour. Lord Derby's own scheme for the settlement of Italy was the creation of a northern and a southern kingdom, divided from each other by Rome, whose independence should be guaranteed by both. While there were large portions of Italy strongly disinclined to accept the sovereignty of the House of Savoy, and while it was still possible to preserve the territorial independence of the Pope, there was a great deal to be said for this suggestion, which would certainly have satisfied the people of Italy at the time much better than unification. On the first night of the Session of 1860 he made an extremely good speech on the question of foreign intervention, laying down in the broadest terms the right of every nation to

manage its own internal affairs, and condemning the interference of both Austria and France in terms of equal stringency. Of the Pope, he said that this country "can look upon the Sovereign Pontiff in no other light than that in which it would look upon any other Sovereign whatever; and the same principles must be applied to him as to other Sovereigns as between himself and his subjects. Viewed in this light, his dynasty is capable of being overthrown, the constitution of his kingdom may be modified by the free will of his subjects, and no foreign Power has a right to interfere between them." Lord Derby was not in favour of the maintenance of the Temporal Power; for he thought that the perfect independence of the Pope could be secured without it by the instrumentality of some such scheme as I have just described. But his tone in speaking of the Temporal Power was uniformly respectful and sympathetic, and secured him for some time the support of the Irish and English Roman Catholics.

In fact there was now a thoroughly good understanding between the Conservative Party and the Roman Catholics: when a combination matured with so much care by Mr. Disraeli, and which promised a Conservative majority at the next general election, was suddenly shattered by one of those unfortunate sarcasms from which no considerations of prudence could ever restrain Lord Derby. In the debate on the Roman Catholic Oaths Bill, June 26, 1865—little more than a month before the dissolution—the second reading of the Bill was moved in the House of Lords by Lord Devon. The object of it was to abolish the oath required by the Act of 1829, and to substitute for it a less exacting one. It was, as Lord Derby must have well known,

a bid for the Roman Catholic vote, which was now on the side of the Conservatives ; yet he could not refrain from the following inopportune metaphor. The “latter part of the oath” referred to in the following quotation is that in which the Roman Catholics are required to swear that they will do nothing to injure the Established Church ; and this Lord Devon had represented as a hardship. Lord Derby said :

My Lords,—In the course of the debate elsewhere an hon. gentleman used an expression which was certainly more forcible than elegant. He said that “the object of this Bill is to unmuzzle the senators.” Unmuzzle them for what purpose ? In dealing with the former part of the oath they say that it is not only unnecessary but injurious, because it calls upon them to repudiate, in words, doctrines which they never desire to sustain ; but when you come to the latter part of the oath, which deals only with a *malum prohibitum*, and not a *malum in se*, the only bar to which is a legislative prohibition, but yet one which we Protestants and which the people of this country maintain to be an important principle, and one which ought to be steadily adhered to and guarded by every safeguard which the law can throw around it—when you come to that, what is the argument ? Not that “we have not the least intention of doing that which you propose to prohibit.” No ; it is because we desire to do the very thing which you wish to prohibit—“unmuzzle us” ; “Unmuzzle us,” says an hon. gentleman, who has lately been returned for an Irish county by the influence of the Roman Catholic priesthood—“unmuzzle us” ; and why ? Because we are harmless ? No, “because we want to bite.” If a man comes to me with a dog with a muzzle on, and says, “Take the muzzle off this poor creature, he will do us no harm, he is quite harmless, and, besides, the muzzle is half rotten, and affords no great protection,” I understand him ; but if he says, “This is a most vicious animal, and nothing prevents his pulling you and me to pieces except the muzzle which is put round his nose, and therefore I want you to take it off,” I am inclined to say, “I am very much obliged to you, but I had rather keep the muzzle on.”

This unhappy little speech deprived the Conservative Party of the Roman Catholic vote ; undid all the work of the last five years ; and gave the Liberals that majority in the House of Commons which led

directly to the Gladstone Reform Bill of 1866, the Derby Reform Bill of 1867, and a long train of consequences, too numerous to mention, of which we have not seen the last.

Another example of the same infirmity was in his description of the different races inhabiting the Italian peninsula, by a quotation from *Macbeth*, in which he himself doubtless saw nothing offensive, the dog in his eyes being a noble animal, but which gave deep offence to the Liberal Party, just as the "muzzling" speech had done to the Roman Catholics. Lord Derby only meant to illustrate his favourite argument that the population of Italy was too heterogeneous to form a united kingdom. The passage is as follows:

Murderer.—"We are men, my liege."

Macbeth.—"Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;
As hounds, and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves, are classed
All by the name of dogs."

The quotation was certainly not wisely chosen. But to suppose that it contained any covert sneer is quite to misunderstand Lord Derby's character.

But the best specimens of Lord Derby's humorous rhetoric are to be found in his speeches at the opening of each Session, in which he summed up the foreign policy of Lord Russell during the previous six months. I would direct special attention to the speeches of February 5, 1861, April 19, 1861, February 5, 1863, and February 4, 1864. Lord Derby condemned the cession of Savoy and Nice as a breach of Sardinia's Treaty engagements with Switzerland, and an infraction of the public law of Europe; and on the 8th February 1860 he made an eloquent appeal to the French Emperor, cordially appreciated by Lord Gran-

ville, not to press a claim which must infallibly lower his position and character in the eyes of all the other great Powers. The present, he said, was a great opportunity for the Emperor, by the strict observance of international law, and respect for the rights of other countries, "to establish a moral power throughout Europe" far greater than his material.

Lord John Russell's diplomacy was, indeed, his favourite topic. Lord John Russell knew in July 1859 that if Tuscany were annexed to Sardinia, France would lay hands on Savoy. He continued through the autumn, and up to the meeting of Parliament, to urge the annexation of Tuscany to Sardinia. The French Minister continued to remind him of the necessary consequences; yet, as soon as Parliament assembled, he declared his disbelief in the rumoured annexation of Savoy to France. Having knowingly violated the conditions on which alone France had promised to abandon the scheme of annexation, he professed to hear with astonishment that she had now revived it.

Besides Italy, the question of Denmark, Poland, the Ionian Islands, the offer of Malta to the Pope, and other little eccentricities, afforded him abundant opportunities for the play of his wit, as the following passages will testify :

The noble Earl and myself had the happiness to be colleagues of one of the most agreeable, most able, and shrewdest of men, the late Lord Melbourne, who also possessed a great deal of ordinary common sense. Lord Melbourne's favourite precept was, "Can't you let it alone? It will do very well if you only let it alone." But that is just the very thing which, with all his experience, and with the example of Lord Melbourne before him, the noble Earl cannot do. He cannot let it alone. We know that the courage and confidence of the noble Earl in undertaking to surmount any possible

difficulty have been proverbial since the days of Sidney Smith. If there be any difficulty of any kind to be settled; if there is any constitution to be re-organized at once; if there is any embarrassing question which has occupied the attention of statesmen for years, almost for centuries: the noble Earl is quite ready. His language always is, "Come, I will settle it at once. I will show you how to do it;" and then, without even the preliminary apology which used to be given by a celebrated character, "I hope I don't intrude," he offers his advice and assistance to any country which he may imagine to stand in need of them.

On the 8th of May 1866 he expressed himself as follows on the Danish question:

You laid down that the action of the German Powers in the affairs of Denmark was a wrong and a robbery; that there was no question as to which was in the right or which was in the wrong; that the aggression was on the part of Germany on inoffensive Denmark, or, at all events, that the offence of Denmark was slight as compared with the wrong of the German Powers; and having done all this, and having gone to such an extent that the Prussian Minister told you, in answer to one of your braggadocio despatches, that it was a declaration of war, when Denmark depended on your moral, if not your material, support, then you took an opportunity of withdrawing from the contest which you yourselves had encouraged, and abandoned the ally whom you had led by your encouragement to maintain her own rights.

And again in the following year:

Now, my Lords, I think that at the commencement the foreign policy of the noble Earl opposite might be summed up in the affirmation of the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, the extension of Liberal principles by the exercise of our moral interference, and above all the maintenance of uninterrupted and cordial relations with the Emperor of the French. We were told more than once that the present Government was the only one to maintain a good understanding with the Emperor of the French, or, at least, that its predecessor could not possibly have done so; and that if the country desired to preserve cordial relations between itself and France, Her Majesty's present advisers, and especially the noble Earl opposite, were the only persons qualified to secure that most desirable object.

Now, my Lords, as to non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries. When I look around me, I fail to see what country there is, in the internal affairs of which the noble Earl and Her

Majesty's Government have not interfered. *Nihil intactum reliquit, nihil tetigit quod*—I cannot say *non ornavit*, but, *non conturbavit*. Or the foreign policy of the noble Earl, as far as the principle of non-intervention is concerned, may be summed up in two short homely but expressive words—"meddle and muddle." During the whole course of the noble Earl's diplomatic correspondence, wherever he has interfered—and he has interfered everywhere—he has been lecturing, scolding, blustering, and retreating. In fact, I cannot think of the foreign policy pursued by the noble Earl and his colleagues without being reminded of another very distinguished body of actors, commemorated, as your Lordship will recollect, in "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Of that celebrated group the two chief ornaments were Bottom, the weaver, and Snug, the joiner. Now, it appears to me that the noble Earl opposite combines the qualities which are attributed to both those distinguished personages. Like Bottom, the weaver, he is ready to play every part, not even excepting that in which he most excels—namely, "Moonshine." But his favourite part is the part of the lion. "Oh," says the noble Earl, "let me play the lion, I will roar so that it will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar so that I make the Duke say, "Let him roar again, let him roar again." The noble Earl, too, knows as well as anyone how, like Bottom, to "aggravate his voice," so that "he will roar you as gently as any sucking dove"; and, moreover, he has had recourse more than once to the ingenious and somewhat original device of letting half his face be seen through the lion's neck, as if to say, "For all my roaring I am no lion at all, only Snug the joiner." There is, however, one point of difference which I would have you observe, because it is rather important. Bottom, the weaver, and Snug, the joiner, were possessed by an earnest desire not to alarm the ladies too much, and consequently they gave due warning at the outset of their intentions, that the audience might not be alarmed. On the other hand, the noble Earl's disclosure, that though the roar was like that of a lion the face was only that of the noble Lord himself, was not made betimes in order that the audience might not be frightened, but only because he found that all the roaring in the world would not frighten them.

On these occasions Lord Derby was quite in his element. In wit, badinage, and satire, he reigned supreme among the Peers. But the ruling passion too frequently ran away with him; and this propensity alone would have been quite enough to justify the well-

known epithet bestowed upon him by the late Lord Lytton :

The brilliant chief, irregularly great,
Frank, haughty, rash, the Rupert of debate.

Though it must be said that all these epithets were not equally applicable to Lord Derby. It is highly creditable, however, both to Lord Derby and Lord Russell, that, in spite of these passages of arms, they remained good friends in private life. Lord Russell at one time was a frequent guest at Knowsley ; but that was at an earlier period.

Apart from foreign politics, the chief subjects in which Lord Derby took an interest during these five years were Mr. Lowe's Revised Code, the repeal of the Paper Duty, the Commercial Treaty with France, Parliamentary Reform, the University Tests Bill, and the re-organization of the Indian Army. He also took an active part in the promotion of the Game Law Amendment Act, which gave the police the power to search suspected poachers on the high road.

The principal objections brought against the Commercial Treaty by Lord Derby were the 3rd and 11th articles, of which the first secured to the French the continuance of their duties upon British shipping, and the second bound us neither to prohibit, nor to impose any duty on, the export of coal. What, asked Lord Derby, then will happen, supposing, not that we are at war with France, but that France is at war with some other Power? By this treaty we, being neutrals between two belligerents, should be bound not to prohibit the export of coal, although it may be contraband of war. Your vessels, going out laden with coal, may be seized by one of the belligerents,

and what is the course you must pursue? Either you must submit to the seizure of your vessels, though the terms of your treaty prevented you from prohibiting the export of their cargoes, or you must avenge yourself of the insult offered, maintain your perfect right to export coal in pursuance of the treaty, and in that way, very probably, may be led into hostilities, and become a principal in the war instead of a spectator.

He supported Lord Monteagle's amendment to the motion for the repeal of the Paper Duty in 1860, on the ground of its inopportuneness; and when the House of Lords rejected it by a majority of eighty-nine, Lord Palmerston, the head of the Government which proposed it, privately asserted that they had done "a right and useful thing." In the following year, however, when the Government carried their Bill a second time through the House of Commons, though by a majority of only fifteen, Lord Derby advised the House of Lords not to resist it any further, and the measure was allowed to pass.

Lord Derby, with his good head for figures and remarkable talents for business, was an authority well worth listening to on financial subjects, and in the then temper of the public mind, had he been sitting in the House of Commons, would have had no difficulty in turning out the Government on the general question of their financial policy any time he liked during the first three years of Lord Palmerston's Administration. But though it was easy to turn out the Liberals, it would, Lord Derby knew, be impossible to keep them out, except by a recourse to tactics which were both dishonest and undignified, or else by a dissolution of Parliament, to which, so soon after a

general election, he entertained constitutional objections. He thought, and perhaps rightly, that by maintaining a firm and temperate attitude, and abstaining not only from all factious opposition, but from everything which was capable of being made to assume the appearance of it, the Conservative Party would gradually strengthen their hold on public opinion, and be accepted at the next general election as the most eligible rulers of the country. The tide was clearly flowing in that direction, and the chief business of the Conservatives was to abstain from doing anything to arrest it. Opinions, however, will long continue to be divided on the policy of Mr. Walpole's Resolution, amounting to a vote of censure, June 3rd, 1862, which was withdrawn on Lord Palmerston's declaration that he should make it a Cabinet question. But it is difficult to doubt, after reading Mr. Walpole's speech, that he had in some way assured himself that in the step he was about to take he would have the approval of Lord Derby, though it might be a silent approval. The Opposition were assured of a majority had the debate gone on, and the consequences, said Mr. Walpole,

would be either a dissolution of Parliament or a change of Administration. The friends with whom I act—the noble Earl at the head of the party with which I am proud to be connected—has, I know, from the beginning of these proceedings—from the beginning of this Session and throughout this Session—publicly in his place in the other House, and privately among his friends, always said that he did not wish to displace the noble Lord opposite.

This is tolerably plain speaking, and though I believe it is true that no communications passed between Lord Derby and Mr. Walpole on this particular occasion, I shall always believe that Lord

Derby did not share Mr. Disraeli's disappointment at the collapse of the assault. As events then stood, he was perhaps in the right. As they subsequently turned out, it would clearly have been better for him to have taken office in 1862 than in 1866. He would then have been able to dissolve his own Parliament, no inconsiderable advantage, as all electioneers know. He would have come in at a moment when Reform was utterly discredited, and when his hands would have been quite free. The waiting game might, in some hands, perhaps, have been the better of the two. But then Lord Derby was not the man to play it: not sufficiently cautious, reticent, or prudent. It was never certain that, in the course of two or three years, he would not say or do something calculated to irritate somebody whom it was expedient to conciliate. And this was what actually happened. The speech of 1864 lost them the Roman Catholic vote, and some twenty or five-and-twenty seats. When he did come in, it was with diminished strength, and with the question of Parliamentary Reform hanging round his neck. If he could have stepped quietly into Lord Palmerston's shoes, as perhaps he hoped to do, he might have been Minister till his death. But the interlude of the Russell Ministry made this impossible, and when he was obliged to form a Government the situation was entirely changed.

The question of Church Rates and University Tests were hardly noticed in the House of Lords during the period we are considering, and though Lord Derby condemned Mr. Lowe's Revised Code, he did not take a leading part in opposition to it. There is one religious question, however, on which some notice is required of the course which he thought it right to

adopt, though at variance with the views of most of his supporters in the House of Lords, and that is the Prison Ministers Bill, empowering the magistrates to appoint Roman Catholic chaplains. Lord Derby defended the Bill in a speech of great ability, appealing to his own uniform support of the Church of England, and the proofs he had given of his devotion to her, to show that he was incapable of advocating any measure in which he could detect the slightest infringement of her interests. Owing mainly to his exertions the Bill was carried by a majority of thirty-five, and Lord Derby had given another proof that he was still the Stanley of 1829 and 1833, though still as ever the unswerving and uncompromising churchman of 1834.

CHAPTER VIII.

LAST YEARS.

1866-1869.

Change in Lord Derby's position—Reform Bill of 1866 —The "Cave" holds aloof—A possible coalition—Lord Derby's third Ministry—Lord Derby's speech on Reform—The Six Hours Bill—The Fenian conspiracy—Retirement from office—Church Rates Bill—Speech on Mr. Gladstone's resolutions—He throws out the Suspension Bill—Speech on the Irish Church Bill—His protest—Last illness and death—The mourning of Lancashire—The cotton famine—Speech at Lancaster—The Derby scholarship—The unveiling of his statue.

WE now approach the closing scene of Lord Derby's political career. We have seen that at the general election of 1865 his party, instead of obtaining a majority, was reduced in number, and in a worse position than it was before for upholding Conservative interests. He, and he alone, had kept Lord Palmerston in power virtually as a Conservative minister, and on all domestic questions had been master of the situation. He had really, from 1859 to 1865, been minister of the interior without the toils of office. But now a very different scene was about to open upon him, and he was to find himself Prime Minister with much less control over the policy of the Govern-

ment than he had possessed when he was leader of the Opposition. In the latter capacity he had maintained the Parliamentary settlement of 1832, he had preserved the securities contained in the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, and he had the satisfaction of seeing the confident assailants of Church Rates in the House of Commons reduced to a minority. As the head of the Government, he was obliged to surrender all three.

I need not trouble my readers with a history of the Reform Bill of 1866. An amendment moved by Lord Dunkellin to substitute a rating for a rental franchise was carried against Government on the 11th of June, and the Ministry at once resigned; a step on which Lord Derby commented with much severity in his "explanation" on the 9th of July. When summoned by the Queen to form a Government, he again tried to form one on an enlarged basis, pointing out to the House of Lords that the state of parties at that moment was such as to deprive a Government, formed on the principle of comprehension, of all the odium of a coalition, since between the Conservative Whigs and the Liberal Conservatives there was now but the shadow of a difference, while at the same time it had been proved to demonstration that it was only by the united efforts of both the great parties in the State that the question of Parliamentary reform could ever hope to be concluded. As a matter of fact this *was* the method by which the Act of 1867 eventually became law, and by which alone, eighteen years afterwards, it was found possible to pass a third Reform Bill to supplement the work of the second. Lord Derby accordingly addressed himself in the first instance to Lord Lansdowne, Lord Shaftesbury, Lord

Clarendon, Lord Grosvenor, who had headed the insurrection in the House of Commons, and also to Mr. Lowe, who more than any other individual had caused the defeat of Mr. Gladstone's Bill. Lord Lansdowne was the only one who gave him any encouragement, and his sudden death,* while still considering what course he should adopt, may have deprived Lord Derby of a colleague of inestimable value. The other three returned a courteous refusal to his overtures, on the ground of party obligations only. It was understood, however, that another combination would not, in the opinion of the Adullamites, have been open to the same objection. Mrs. Lowe told Lord Malmesbury, who met her at dinner at Lord Tankerville's, that the Adullamites could not join Lord Derby because that would be ratting, but were ready to combine in a Government of which Lord Stanley should be the head. I believe that Mr. Disraeli, even if the suggestion did not originate with himself, was perfectly willing to fall in with it. But it was impracticable for many reasons; not the least being the fact that it was distasteful to Lord Stanley himself.

The fear of being accused of ratting was, I fancy, an excuse. The man is a rat who deserts his principles, not the man who adheres to them when the rest of his party abandon them. Mr. Lowe and his friends might have appealed from the new Liberals to the old, and have asked who were really the rats. If the members of the Cave meant what they said in the debates of 1866, they should at once have thrown in their lot with Lord Derby, have joined his Government, and

* He was suddenly seized with paralysis while playing whist at his club.

have used all their parliamentary interest and local influence to secure him a majority at the next general election. Then indeed Lord Derby might have waited for the result of it, and there might have been some chance of Mr. Lowe's prayer being granted and of the fatal day being at all events deferred for a season. But when it came to the point, their hearts failed them. Having put their hands to the plough, they looked back, and the result is what we now see. Their refusal destroyed the only chance which still remained of maintaining the existing settlement, and Mr. Lowe in particular should have remembered this when he attacked Lord Derby so violently for bringing in a "Democratic Reform Bill." Why did he not help him to stand on the defensive. His union with the Government at that moment would have been worth a lifetime of independent support, which often only means that you are upholding what you think a bad Government, merely to exclude a worse.

Where, where was Roderick then?
One blast upon his bugle horn
Were worth a thousand men.

Lord Derby in fact, even had he been so disposed, found no encouragement in any quarter to persevere in an attitude of resistance; and to have asked the Conservative Party to stand in the breach by themselves would have been certain death to them, and no good to anybody else. A Reform Bill would have been carried over their dead bodies, and they would have been wiped out of political life as completely as the Eldonian Tories after 1832; remembered only as a blind and bigotted party who had fallen a sacrifice to their own obstinacy.

Lord Derby accordingly took office for a third time with a Cabinet formed entirely of his own supporters, but of which the principal places were filled by quite as able men as any that had sat in the Russell Cabinet. Lord Stanley was Foreign Secretary. Lord Carnarvon was Secretary for the Colonies. General Peel was War Secretary. The Marquis of Abercorn was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Lord John Manners went to the Board of Works. Mr. Disraeli was Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Almost all the events of the three momentous years which followed the death of Lord Palmerston are lost in the universal interest excited by the question of Parliamentary Reform. The first foretaste of what was to come, and of the spirit in which Lord Derby would be met, was the Hyde Park Riot got up for the occasion, when the railings were broken down, the police set at defiance, and the park forcibly taken possession of by a mob of roughs and vagabonds. A speech of Mr. Forster's at Leeds in the following October still further showed Lord Derby what he had to expect. Lord Derby, whose health was now fast failing, spoke of these occurrences in the House of Lords, as it might have been expected that he would speak, but without the verve, the eagle glance, the commanding mien which had raised him above all his Peers when his powers were unimpaired. On the Jamaica insurrection and the case of Governor Eyre, which would once have called forth all his eloquence, he was now silent. He spoke on the Parliamentary Oaths Bill—a revival of the Roman Catholic Oaths Bill of 1865—which now, with a saving clause added by Lord Chelmsford, he was obliged to accept, and took the opportunity, when it was too late, of expressing his

regret that a construction had been placed on his employment of the word "muzzling," which he had never intended it to bear. He had previously written a letter to Dr. Bakewell, a Roman Catholic supporter of Mr. Beresford Hope, pointing out that the expression was not his own, and disclaiming all responsibility for it.

The Reform Bill, however, as I have stated, was the event of the year; and Lord Derby's opinions on the subject are well known. He would have preferred to let well alone. But as the question had been forced on by others, he had no alternative but to endeavour to find some solution of it which should have a fair prospect of permanence. This he was quite certain an intermediate franchise between £10 and a rating suffrage would not possess. On this point he entirely agreed with Mr. Disraeli. And, indeed, the justice of this view was so apparent that the large majority of the Tory Party adopted it almost of their own accord. His famous remark that the measure was a "leap in the dark," is to be found in a short speech which he delivered on the third reading of the Bill on the 6th of August 1867.

Upon the motion that the Bill do pass, I take the opportunity, my Lords, of expressing, on my own part and on behalf of the Government, our grateful acknowledgment of the very temperate, fair, and candid manner in which your Lordships have dealt with this question. I have now had the honour of holding a seat in one or the other Houses of Parliament for five-and-forty years, and during that space of time I do not recollect another instance of a measure of such vast importance, and involving such great and extensive changes, passing through Parliament with so little display of party spirit, or so little acerbity and acrimony, as have marked the progress of the Bill to which your Lordships have just given your assent. For my own part, my Lords, I can only express a hope that in conducting this measure I have not deviated from the line of fair, candid, and tem-

perate discussion, and that I have not exhibited any undue warmth, or let fall a single syllable that can offend or wound the feelings of any of your Lordships.

I have felt strongly the necessity and the importance of passing this Bill first of all because, after being accepted by the House of Commons, its rejection by your Lordships would have been fraught with imminent peril, and next, because I indulged a hope—which I am glad to see has been shared by noble Lords opposite—that in the adoption of this Bill we may find the means of putting a stop to the continued agitation of a question which, as long as it remained unsettled, only stood in the way of all useful legislation. No doubt we are making a great experiment, and “taking a leap in the dark,” but I have the greatest confidence in the sound sense of my fellow-countrymen, and I entertain a strong hope that the extended franchise which we are now conferring upon them will be the means of placing the institutions of this country on a firmer basis, and that the passing of this measure will tend to increase the loyalty and contentment of a great portion of Her Majesty’s subjects.

In his Ministerial explanation of March 4th, 1867, Lord Derby gave a short history of the circumstances preceding the introduction of the “final measure” of Reform which was ultimately passed; and of the resignation of his three colleagues—Lord Carnarvon, Lord Cranbourne, and General Peel. But the shortest and clearest account of the “Six Hours Bill” is to be found in Lord Malmesbury’s *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 366.

It was said by Mr. Bright, speaking on the 5th of March, that the Bill of 1867 was “Lord Derby’s Bill.” The statement has been generally overlooked, but there is probably this amount of truth in it: that Lord Derby had for some time before taking office been prepared to adopt a rating suffrage, that he supplied many of the details, and that he had quite as much voice in the matter as Mr. Disraeli.

On the 17th of October a grand banquet to Her Majesty’s Ministers was given at Manchester, when

Lord Derby, in a long and very interesting speech, again vindicated the part which he had taken on the Reform question, explained what he meant by "a leap in the dark," and expressed his unabated confidence in the good sense and loyalty of the working classes. He did not believe they wanted to pull down the throne; he did not believe they were hostile to the Established Church; and he was sure that they still entertained a great respect and regard for the "ancient families of the country." Lord Derby's own experience had been a peculiarly favourable one; but assuming that the relations between the aristocracy and the working classes in general were such as he described, there was, nevertheless, a danger ahead to which he was not blind, but of which, I cannot help thinking, that he under-rated the real magnitude. He cautioned the newly enfranchised classes against being led astray by demagogues who would first teach them to cry for the moon, and then promise to obtain it for them. Here, he said, was the real danger to the institutions of the country, if the working classes should ever allow themselves to be enlisted under a revolutionary banner in the expectation of some earthly Paradise, only to wake up and find themselves miserably disappointed.

Why, of course, this was *the* danger, the very rock ahead which Mr. Lowe and others had pointed out. They doubted very much whether the loyalty of the working classes would be proof against the temptations which it was in the power of the Radicals to hold out to them. Lord Derby was more sanguine, and took the same hopeful view of the future which he had taken in 1832. Which was the truer prophet it is even now, perhaps, too early to decide. The

omens do not all point in one direction, and the horizon is very thick.

Oh, drain not to the dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy.

In 1867 an autumn session was rendered necessary by the Abyssinian Expedition, and this was almost the last occasion of any consequence on which Lord Derby appeared in his place as Prime Minister. But though his physical strength was fast giving way, his mind was as powerful as ever; and his speech on the Address, November 19th, in which he gave a clear and concise account of our quarrel with Abyssinia, and drew a picture of the Fenian conspiracy, which I shall quote entire, might have been delivered in his best days.

My Lords, I ought not to say anything, more especially under present circumstances, when four men are lying under sentence of death—I ought not to say anything to aggravate the crime of this Fenian conspiracy; but, at the same time, I must protest in the strongest terms against those who, in the public press or elsewhere, have assumed that those outrages—those cowardly and dastardly outrages—are to be classed in the category of political offences, and, therefore, to be treated differently from murders ordinarily committed. In the first place, the object of this Fenian conspiracy is not the removal of any grievance, not the redress of any evil of which they have to complain, but the avowed, distinct object is to upset the Government of the Queen in her dominions and to constitute an Irish Republic.

There is some respect to be paid to those who openly and avowedly come forward to oppose constituted authority, and are prepared by force of arms to establish their principles and views. To such cases as these the character of political crimes may be attached, but no such character can be given to crimes where the sole means of effecting the object of disturbance, that is subversion of authority, and complete anarchy throughout the country are secret incendiarism, attacks on unprotected houses, murders of single and unarmed policemen, attempts to fire houses by men who have not courage to show themselves, who at the appearance of a corporal's

guard betake themselves to flight, and leave their unfortunate comrades to suffer the penalties of their crimes. That whatever may be urged in mitigation of the crimes committed under the Fenian conspiracy ; whatever the disposition on the part of the Crown and people to show all mercy in consistency with the judicial vindication of the law, I cannot for one moment, and I am sure the country will not for one moment, connect the idea of offences of this description with those ordinarily known as political offences, and which as political offences may be regarded with some sort of respect by a large portion of the people.

Lord Derby was able to attend in his place till the adjournment of the House on the 7th of December. But in January he was again laid up with a violent attack of gout, which about the middle of February assumed an alarming character, and Lord Stanley was summoned to Knowsley. He rallied sufficiently to reappear in the House of Lords early in the Session, but no longer as the head of the Government. On the 24th of February he retired from office, and left the premiership to Mr. Disraeli. But though too weak for the labour and responsibility of government, he continued to take an active part in the House of Lords' debates, and was still regarded as the ex-official leader of the party. On the abolition of Church rates he spoke in a tone of dignified regret. But he did not ask the House of Lords again to hold the question over till after the opinion of the new constituencies had been taken. The Bill introduced was ostensibly for the abolition of "compulsory" Church rates, but Lord Derby tore the mask from the flimsy imposture in a moment. The Bill cancelled the common law obligation of the whole people to contribute to the maintenance of the Church's fabrics, and by so doing abandoned "the great principle that the Church of England was the Established Church of the country."

He quoted at the same time a former saying of Lord Russell's, that "if you do away with the rate you do away with the Church, and if you do away with the Church you do away with the Throne."

It is said the Bill is a compromise ; but I say it is no compromise, but is an absolute and entire surrender on the part of the Established Church of the whole principle that has hitherto guided our legislation in reference to that Church

Whatever alteration you may make in the Bill in Committee, you cannot, I believe, get rid of this, its fundamental vice, that it is an abandonment, without any compensation, of the great principle that the Church of England is the Established Church of the country. That is a principle which this country has always regarded as a vital one for its existence and its constitution. I do not go so far as the noble Earl opposite (Earl Russell) went a few years ago, when he said, if you do away with Church rates you do away with the Church, and if you do away with the Church, you do away with the Throne ; but I say that by the adoption of this measure you will be unwittingly forwarding the objects of those who are opposed to all Establishments and all endowments for religious purposes, and you will be taking a large step towards what I consider a serious evil, namely, the equalization of all sects in this country, and the abolition of any distinction between the Established Church and all other denominations of Christians. At the same time I think that, considering the large majority who supported the Bill in the House of Commons, Her Majesty's Government are justified in assenting to the motion for its second reading ; and, for my part, I am not disposed to interfere with the apparent unanimity which seems to exist in this House in favour of the motion ; but I must so far enter my protest against the measure as to express my belief that no alterations that can be made in the Bill in Committee will do away with the serious objections to its details, and that even if they did, the vice of its principle would remain and would continue to be of a vital and fundamental character.

It will be remembered that on the 30th of March Mr. Gladstone introduced his three famous "Resolutions" on the Irish Church, the second and third of which were as follows:—

2. That, subject to the foregoing consideration, it is expedient to prevent the creation of new personal interests by the exercise of any

public patronage, and to confine the operations of the ecclesiastical commissioners of Ireland to objects of immediate necessity or involving individual rights, pending the final decision of Parliament.

3. That a humble address be presented to Her Majesty, humbly praying that, with a view to the purposes aforesaid, Her Majesty will be graciously pleased to place at the disposal of Parliament her interest in the temporalities of the Archbishoprics, Bishoprics, and other ecclesiastical dignities and benefices in Ireland and in the custody thereof.

Lord Derby immediately pointed out to the House of Lords the unconstitutional character of these proposals, inasmuch as the petition to Her Majesty begging her to suspend the exercise of her royal prerogative could not constitutionally proceed from one House of Parliament alone, or on the motion of a private individual not speaking on behalf of the Government.

There is an entire and absolute distinction between the two questions. I admit the noble Earl is quite prepared to show that in 1835 he took the same course he recommends Mr. Gladstone to take in 1868; but he will excuse me saying that that is only a reference from Earl Russell in 1868 to Lord John Russell in 1835, and it does not add any authority to the proposal. I contend it is no precedent at all. There is a broad constitutional difference between the course proposed in 1835 and the course sought to be pursued now. The one was the legitimate advice of ministers to the Crown to permit the passing of an Act of Parliament; the other is the advice of the House of Commons to the Crown to act upon a resolution of that House alone, not only without, but in defiance of the authority of Acts of Parliament. The noble Earl concluded by expressing the hope that Mr. Gladstone would be more successful than he was. The noble Earl was so far successful upon the occasion alluded to that he ousted Sir Robert Peel from office; and having done so, he gave effect to his own principles by the introduction of a Bill. That Bill, so far from being defeated by Sir Robert Peel, Sir James Graham, and myself, actually passed through the House of Commons, and was sent up to the House of Lords. Here a motion was made to separate that portion of the Bill which related to the settlement of the tithe question, which was not objectionable, from that portion to which great constitutional objection was felt, namely, the principle of disestablishing the Estab-

lished Church in Ireland. That motion—that is, the omission of the appropriation clause—was carried by a majority of 96. The noble Earl, however, continued in office, and, in the following year, he had the satisfaction of settling the tithe question, or what remained of it to be settled; and those who were opposed to the noble Earl had the satisfaction of knowing that they had defeated the principle against which they contended in the year before. The noble Earl had the satisfaction of retaining office, and those who opposed him had the satisfaction of putting a stop for thirty-three years to all agitation on the subject of a change which the noble Earl had declared to be indispensably necessary.

The Resolutions, however, were carried; and on the 14th of May Mr. Gladstone obtained leave to bring in a Bill to prevent for a limited time new appointments in the Irish Church, and to restrain for the same period the proceedings of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for Ireland. The Bill was carried in the House of Commons on the 22nd by a majority of fifty-four, but was defeated in the House of Lords on the 25th of June by a majority of eighty-nine. Lord Derby's speech on this occasion was a wonderful effort for a man so broken in health; and he readily induced the Peers to listen to the argument to which the Radical majority in the House of Commons had turned a deaf ear, namely, that the existing Parliament was not "morally competent" to pronounce judgment on the question. But the most striking passages are as follows:—

When I spoke just now of a prescription of more than three hundred years, I did very little justice to the argument I am bringing before you, because the prescription of more than three hundred years would point to the Reformation as the first period in which the Church obtained a right to its possessions. Now the right of the Church in this country—the Church, whatever it might have been—the right of the Church to the possessions of the Church dates from a period antecedent not only to the Reformation, but antecedent to the existence and creation of Parliament. It was stated in a debate

a few years ago by a right hon. friend of mine (Mr. Gathorne Hardy) now a Secretary of State, that there is actually at this moment a living in the diocese of Meath which was the property of the Church in the sixth century—that is 600 years before the conquest of Ireland by England, and before the subjection of Ireland to the power of the Papacy. My Lords, the Reformation did not create Church property. The Reformation was partly political and partly religious. It was a protest against Roman Catholic Doctrine and against the usurpation of the See of Rome.

It was the termination of a long struggle for which the minds of the people had been long prepared, and it laid down certain conditions for those who were to share in the pecuniary benefits of Church property, which conditions were complied with to a great extent by the great majority of the bishops and clergy of that day. There were transfers from individuals, but there was never a question of transferring Church property to the State, or of secularizing it. There was indeed one exception—the confiscation of the monasteries. It was a deep and dark blot upon what would otherwise have been a glorious page in the history of this country. There is no doubt those monasteries required reform—that there were many abuses—that their property might have been applied more advantageously to the service of the Church of which they were members than according to the system which existed; but that was no ground for an act of which I am happy to say there has, up to the present moment, been no similar example—the confiscation of ecclesiastical property, and the distribution of that property among the rapacious nobles and courtiers of that time.

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A noble Lord (Earl Russell), when I mentioned this question about monastic property, answered: “Oh yes, that is all very well; but there is a personal representative in the one case and no personal representative in the other.” Now I confess I cannot draw such a distinction. There is no personal representation by inheritance or entail; but in the case of every clergyman who succeeds to a benefice there is a personal representation of the original corporation. The endowments of the Church were not conferred upon the individual clergyman for his own use or benefit. They were conferred upon the clergyman as a corporation sole, as a trustee, bound to hand down to his successor that property which he enjoyed in consideration of the duties he performed; and that individual corporation sole was a member of a large aggregate corporation, which corporation was responsible for the due maintenance and application of the property of the Church. The right hon. gentleman who has the credit—or discredit—of this

Bill objected, I recollect, in the strongest terms, to the principle of a salaried or stipendiary clergy. I agree with him, and I think the great merit of the constitution of the Church of England is that its clergy are neither salaried nor stipendiary. They are men in possession of a freehold for life, and they are trustees of that freehold for their successors. They receive that property, and they are bound to maintain it. They are free in all respects from the inconvenience, on the one hand, of the voluntary system, which subjects the clergyman to the caprice of his parishioners; and on the other, they are perfectly free from being overborne by the influence of the Crown, or the Minister. They enjoy their freehold for life, and their right to it is as complete and entire as that of any of your Lordships to the property you possess.

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But, it is said, "Parliament gave these endowments, and therefore Parliament can take them away." I deny the fact in the first place, and the inference in the next. I say, in the first place, Parliament did not give this property; and, in the next, that if it did give it, it has no right to take it away. Parliament some time ago, for signal services rendered to the country, conferred them upon the ancestors of my noble friend who now sits near me (the Duke of Marlborough) and of another noble Duke, Blenheim and Strathfieldsaye. They were given by Act of Parliament. But will any human being contend that, while leaving the present possessors to enjoy them for their life, Parliament which granted may resume the gifts, and at its pleasure despoil those two noble Dukes of their inheritance? But I say Parliament did not grant the property which is now held by the Church in Ireland.

But this was his last victory. The general election gave a large majority to Mr. Gladstone, though Lancashire testified its loyalty to Lord Derby in a very marked manner, and all his Roman Catholic tenantry voted for "my lord." Mr. Disraeli resigned without waiting to meet Parliament, a resolution of which Lord Derby ultimately approved, though at first rather inclined to dissent from it. Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister, and the work of disestablishment commenced forthwith.

The Irish Church Bill of 1869 went up to the House of Lords in June, and on the 17th of that month

Lord Derby made his last great speech in that august assembly, which for a quarter of a century had literally hung upon his lips. Lord Derby had delivered more powerful and brilliant declamations, more luminous and exhaustive logic, he had delighted his hearers with more humorous satire, and amused them with more exquisite comedy, but never in his palmiest days had he touched a tone of such profound pathos, or thrilled his hearers with such solemn and prophetic earnestness, delivered, as it were, with one foot in the grave, and free from the influence of all worldly ambitions, as in that ever memorable speech, in which he remarked that his official career was over, that his political career was nearly closed, and that his natural life could not be expected to survive it beyond a brief interval. The following extract will perhaps convey the best idea of the general character of the speech:—

It is not very long since the noble Earl at the Table (Earl Russell)—and many of his colleagues agreed with him—expressed the opinion that a Bill for the absolute disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Church could not be carried without the horrors of a revolution; and the noble Earl added that if a Bill of that description came up to your Lordships' House it would be your bounden duty to repeal it. I entertain the same opinion. When I speak of a revolution I mean a bloodless revolution—of an entire social revolution. I speak of a revolution that will make an entire change in the feelings and habits of the people; I speak of a revolution that will seriously affect the relations between town and country; a revolution which, instead of being the messenger of peace and conciliation which the noble Earl (Granville) contended it would be, has kindled to a degree beyond all possible conception the strongest feelings of anger and animosity, which has been a sword sent to Ireland, and placed in every man's hand so that a man's nearest neighbours have been converted into his deadliest enemies. My Lords, that revolution, you may depend upon it, is in progress, and God knows where it will stop. Is it possible that your Lordships can conceive what will be the feeling of the Protestants of Ireland when they find themselves, as they assuredly will if this Bill should pass, not only injured but insulted, when they

find themselves betrayed by their reliance on your protection, and thrown over by you in a matter where their fondest hopes and dearest interests are so deeply concerned? Can you expect that those men will still retain for the Parliament of England that loyalty, that attachment and that devotion to the cause of the union between the two countries which has so long characterised them, and, whatever imprudence a portion of them may have been chargeable with at times, that loyalty and that affection towards the Crown and the people of England from which they have not for a single moment faltered. My Lords, may I venture upon an illustration of a very simple kind with which all your Lordships are probably acquainted, and which none of your Lordships can have heard without having been touched by its simple pathos. The language represents the feelings of a poor gipsy when she and her tribe were driven out from the homes in which they had for many years found a shelter, and driven out by a man to whom they had long looked for protection—a protection which they had repaid with the most affectionate devotion. The noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Argyle) will pardon me if I fail in giving the right accent—“Ride your ways, Laird of Ellangowan! Ride your ways, Godfrey Bertram. This day have ye quenched seven smoking hearths; see if the fire in your ain parlour burn the blyther for that. Ye have riven the thack of seven cottar houses; look if your ain roof-tree stand the faster. . . . There’s thirty hearts there that wad hae wanted bread ere ye had wanted suckets, and spent their life-blood ere ye had scratched your finger.”

My Lords, it is with sentiments like these, with sorrow but with resentment, that the Protestants of Ireland may look upon you from whom they expected protection, a protection which they repaid with the most faithful loyalty, when they now find you laying upon them the heavy hand of that which I must consider an undeserved oppression. They may say, “Go your ways, Ministers of England! ye have this day, so far as in you lay, quenched the light of spiritual truth in 1,500 parishes. See if your own Church stand the faster for that.” There are, not seven, nor thirty, but 700,000 hearts and 700,000 more who have connected themselves with you in loyal attachment to the Sovereign for the sake of that Protestant religion which you both profess, who, in defence of that Union which you induced them to form, would have shed their dearest life-blood. Remember who these men are. These are the men whom you invited to settle on the soil of Ireland for the establishment and support of the Protestant religion. These are the men who at the time of the sorest trial of the Crown of England came forward to support William the Deliverer, and who at the battle of

the Boyne vindicated the freedom of Ireland and the rights of the Protestant religion. These are the men who, invited by you to settle in Ireland, converted Ulster from a barren waste into a thriving province, and who, by their energy, their industry, and their steady conduct, have made the province of Ulster not only the garden of Ireland, but the most gratifying and wonderful contrast to other parts of Ireland in which the influence of the Protestant religion does not prevail. Was it, my Lords, at their own desire that they abandoned their independence, and constituted themselves a portion of the Empire? No, my Lords; it was at the earnest solicitation of England. And when they had the game in their own hands, and could have done as they pleased, they consented to be associated with you. And what was the offer you made them? The offer you made them was this—that if they consented to relinquish their independence they would be associated with this great Empire, and above all that their Church should be firmly established, and placed by their union with you upon a basis from which nothing could remove it. Do you think they would have consented if they had known that the very step which you induced them to take as a means of promoting and supporting the interests of their Church would be made the means of their destruction (*i.e.* the United Parliament)?

Whether, if Lord Derby had been ten years younger and Prime Minister, he would have induced the peers to throw out the Bill on the second reading, it is impossible to say. But they probably felt that if they were to enter on a conflict with the House of Commons, they would require all the abilities, eloquence, and courage which Lord Derby had possessed in his prime to enable them to do so with the smallest prospect of success. At all events, they decided to let the Bill pass, and the second reading was carried by a majority of thirty-three. A protest, written by Lord Derby, and signed by forty-three peers, was entered on the Lords' journals on the 12th of July, the day on which the Bill was read a third time. It is admirably written, in the calm and dignified, yet forcible and pointed style which becomes a State paper of this character, and concludes with the two

following paragraphs, embodying the views which he had expressed at greater length in the speech delivered on the second reading.

7th.—Because this Bill was felt as a grievous injustice by the Protestants of Ireland, who, through their Irish Parliament, surrendered their political independence by a treaty, the fundamental of which was the greater security of the Protestant establishment.

8th.—Because, while this measure will tend to alienate those who have hitherto been the firmest supporters of the British throne and British connection, so far from conciliating, much less satisfying, it will only stimulate to fresh demands that large portion of the Roman Catholic population of Ireland which looks forward to ulterior and very different objects, and, above all, to ultimate emancipation from the control of the British legislation.

This is the “prophetic strain” of old experience. This was his last act. He may be said to have died sword in hand in defence of the ecclesiastical constitution in whose cause he had fleshed his maiden steel, and whose flag he had borne triumphantly through so many hard-fought fields during more than forty years’ political warfare.

At the end of the Session he returned to Knowsley to lay his bones among his own people. Nor had he long to wait. His malady returned upon him with increasing force during the next few months, and on the 25th of October he breathed his last, in the seventy-first year of his age. He was buried, by his own desire, in the little village church of Knowsley, which stands about half a mile beyond the gates of Knowsley Park. The funeral was attended by many distinguished friends and relatives; but by none probably was he mourned more sincerely than by the long file of tenantry who followed him to the grave, scarce one of whom but had good reason to remember the liberality, sympathy, and kindness which were

extended by the deceased statesman to all his humbler neighbours and dependants. At Liverpool and Birkenhead the flags on the public buildings and on many of the vessels in the docks were hoisted half-mast high. The bells in the churches rang muffled peals. At Preston the shops belonging to the tenants were all closed and the blinds drawn down, and the passing bell was rung. It may be said, indeed, without exaggeration, that all North Lancashire was in mourning; and the Rev. W. L. Fielden, the vicar of Knowsley, spoke the general sense when he said in his sermon of the following Sunday :

A more upright, conscientious, high-minded public servant this country never witnessed than he whose removal from the earthly scene of his labours and his conflicts for his country's sake, we, in common, I am sure, with the whole body of his fellow-countrymen, whether they coincided with the particular opinions he professed and the measures he advocated, or not, are now deploring. I am sure that if anyone ever was influenced in his conduct by a high sense of duty, he of whom we are thinking was pre-eminently so. I must add a word in regard to the feeling with which we, as persons most immediately connected with one who but now was the leading influence amongst ourselves, must regard the disruption of ties which bound all who in any way depended upon him who has gone from us in a manner unusual but real. There was the ordinary tie which exists between every good landlord and his tenants, and he was the best of landlords; ever a kind and considerate master to his dependants—ever a munificent benefactor to those he benefited. But beyond this, in the case of him we mourn there was the tie of admiration for his high qualities, of respect for that great position amongst his fellow-men that he had achieved for himself, and which induced in us all a feeling of something akin to pride in being connected with anyone whose reputation and whose influence were so world-wide. We, of all people, surely must deplore the loss of one who in a special manner seemed to belong to us, and of whom we have been so proud.

But Lord Derby's power and popularity extended far beyond the limits of his own estates, wide as they were, and there was scarcely a factory or a garret in

all Lancashire and Cheshire where his name was not mentioned with veneration and gratitude. And this, perhaps, will be the fittest place to refer to Lord Derby's exertions during the great Lancashire distress occasioned by the American Civil War in 1862-3. The period during which the cotton famine was at its height was about eighteen months—that is, from the beginning of the year 1862 to the middle of 1863. It was in the month of May that the two principal relief agencies were organized—namely, the Mansion House Committee in London, and the Central Executive Relief Committee at Manchester. Of this, the first chairman was the Earl of Ellesmere, who, resigning shortly afterwards, was succeeded by the Earl of Derby, to whom Mr. Arthur Arnold, in his *History of the Cotton Famine*, pays a compliment not less eloquent than just. His remarkable business talents, and the rapidity with which he mastered the most complicated details when he once gave his mind to the subject, pointed him out as the fittest man for the position, even had he not been a great Lancashire proprietor with hereditary local duties to perform, as well as one of the most eminent statesmen of the day. His services were simply priceless, independently of his munificent contributions, the total amount of which was between seven and eight thousand pounds.

Yet, there was a time when the public grumbled, and complained that the Lancashire landowners had not done their duty. The complaint was grossly unjust; but it had the good effect of bringing together a great meeting at Lancaster on the 2nd of December 1862, when Lord Derby made a grand speech, partly in vindication of the Lancashire aristocracy, partly in eulogy of the working classes, and partly a *résumé*

of the whole situation drawn with consummate eloquence and graphic power.

Soon after Lord Derby's death a movement was set on foot for the promotion of some suitable memorial in his honour to be provided by the county of Lancaster, of which the Stanleys were hereditary leaders. In April 1870, at a meeting in the Town Hall of Manchester, it was decided to found a Derby scholarship for the benefit of young men belonging to the county who were going up to the University of Oxford. The scheme does not seem to have been carried out exactly upon these lines; but a scholarship was provided on the principle of the Eldon scholarship, and of the annual value of £157. It is open to all graduates who have completed their twentieth, and not exceeded their twenty-fourth, term. A candidate to be eligible must either have gained a first class in *Literis humanioribus*, both in moderations and the final schools, or a second class in the final schools, together with two out of the three chancellors' prizes, one of which must be the Latin verse; or, thirdly, two out of the three University scholarships—the Ireland, the Hertford, or the Craven. Thus it will be seen that the memory of Lord Derby is kept alive at Oxford by a tribute to the value of classical scholarship, and especially to that branch of it in which he excelled himself—namely, Latin versification.

A memorial statue of Lord Derby was erected in Miller Square, Preston, in 1873. But another and more interesting one, erected by his political and private friends, looks out upon "that famous Parliament of England," which, though it may have listened to as great statesmen as Lord Derby, since his voice was silent, has not, take him all in all, yet seen his

peer. This statue was unveiled by Mr. Disraeli on the 11th of July 1874, when he summed up the leading features of the character and career of his former chief in his usual epigrammatic style: "He abolished slavery, he educated Ireland, he reformed Parliament." These, then, in Mr. Disraeli's judgment, were the three great achievements of Lord Derby's life; and though I do not quite agree in this estimate of Lord Derby's public services, it is quite true that the measures in question were, one entirely due to, and the others largely influenced by, "his own individual energy." It appears, too, from this speech, that Mr. Disraeli considered the success of the First Reform Bill to have been in great part due to Mr. Stanley, and to the "daring determination" which he exhibited. Mr. Disraeli wound up his speech by saying—"We have raised this statue to him not only as a memorial, but as an example; not only to commemorate, but to inspire."

Lord Malmesbury spoke in very interesting tones of Lord Derby as he was in private life, bearing special testimony to his affectionate disposition, his sweetness of temper, his unbounded liberality, and his rare accomplishments, which were only equalled by the modesty which forbade him to be conscious of them. Lord Malmesbury specially mentioned his readings from Shakespeare, with which he used to indulge the family circle at Knowsley. Shakespeare, Scott, and, in earlier days, Milton, were his chief favourites; but I believe there is no foundation for the report that Tennyson was among the number. I have been told, however, that his reading, excellent as it was, did not equal his speaking, as it was less natural, and savoured rather more of the style which

might have been expected from him, had his first instructress in elocution been the accomplished actress who became his grandfather's wife. It is curious that Lord Derby, with his fine ear for rhythm and his own admirable delivery, should have been totally indifferent to music. He shared this peculiarity with two very great men—Dr. Johnson and Charles Fox, between whom and Lord Derby there are many other points of resemblance; but he did not carry it to such lengths as has sometimes been asserted. It is not true, for instance, as I have seen it stated, that when he was at Knowsley all the pianos were closed.

CHAPTER IX.

LORD DERBY AS A MAN OF LETTERS.

Lord Derby's Latin and English—His Latin prose—The poem on Syracuse—Translation of the *Iliad*—Comparisons with Pope and Tennyson—Reasons for choosing blank verse—Minor translations—Classic statesmen—"Conversations on the Parables."

LORD DERBY was a scholar of the same stamp as Lords Grenville and Wellesley. He wrote Latin both in verse and prose with great purity and fluency; he has produced one of the best translations of the *Iliad* of Homer which our literature can boast, and his other translations both from Anacreon, Catullus, and Horace, as well as from French, German, and Italian poets, clearly show that he possessed the literary faculty in no ordinary degree, and that a great English classic may have been lost in him when he devoted himself to politics. In an able notice of his Homer in the *Edinburgh Review*, the writer points out that Lord Derby's oratorical powers gave him an advantage over all other translators of Homer, in whom rapidity, simplicity, and sublimity are so constantly united. We, too, may point out that his scholarship

in turn and his literature were of equal benefit to his oratory, which, in its most vigorous passages, is always elegant, and in its most finished passages is always vigorous. But Lord Derby was also a great master of plain English prose; and even in the reports which he drew up in 1862 as Chairman of the Central Executive Committee for the relief of the Lancashire distress are to be found many pieces of writing which it is a pleasure to read for the sake of the style only: simple and direct, concise and luminous, they are models of what such documents ought to be.

Of his Latin prose, the speech he made on the 16th of June 1863, on admitting the Prince of Wales to the degree of Doctor of Civil Law, is perhaps the best extant specimen. His compliments to the Princess of Wales are very happy.

Illustrissime Princeps, Britanniarum Spes et Expectatio,

Antiquitus usitatum, quoties hæc annua fiat Benefactorum nostrorum Commemoratio, eos academicis honoribus decorare, qui aut per genus et proavos illustres extitere, aut qui in arte militari seu nauticâ bene de patriâ meruere, aut in philosophia scientiave, aut in rebus publicis gerendis eximios se præstitere, aut quorum denique de flore juventutis largos fructus maturæ ætatis haud dubiis indiciis augurari licet, plus quam solenni lætitiâ hodierno die perficimus: nec mediocriter auget lætitiâ, quod illustrissimam conjugem tuam tui honoris sociam participem adhibuisti.

De eâ quid loquar? Ipsa adest; et in egregiâ formæ pulchritudine, in benignâ dulcium oculorum luce, in fronte illâ nobili et pudica, nobis omnibus, qui hic adsumus, innatas virtutes animæ, velut in speculo mirari licet. Illam stirpe regiâ ortam, gente amicissimâ editam, quacum utinam indies conjunctiora fiant amicitie nostræ vincula, ex quo primum die oras nostras tetigit, non jam ut alienam, sed ut indigenam, non hospitem sed familiarem, non nurum, sed filiam dilectissimam suam sibi Patria hæc omnis propriamque vindicat.

Reminding his audience of the Prince's good behaviour as an undergraduate, he proceeds:

Quippe haud ignarus neminem imperii capacem futurum, nisi qui

adolescens auctoritati obtemperare noverit: ideoque ii qui tecum in statu pupillari versabantur—

Sensere quid mens rite quid indoles
Nutrita faustis sub penetralibus
Posset, quid “Alberti” paternus
In pueros animus Britannos

Horum memores, et ab auspicio bono profecti, optime de futuro augurantes, te cum assensu plausuque omnium, togam Doctoris in Jure Civili induere decrevimus: et in hoc gradu superiori academico tribuendo nobis in animo est, ut amorem et venerationem significamus quibus Augustissimam matrem tuam, quibus illustrissimi tui Genitoris memoriam, quibus denique te ipsum colimus; necnon spem nostram certamque fiduciam, te sanguinem unde editus, mores quibus instructus, altam sortem adquam natus es, factis tuis nunquam dedecoraturum.

Bishop Wilberforce spoke of this as “Derby’s wonderful Latin speech.”

We have said that the poem on Syracuse is more spirited than smooth. But the following passage may perhaps be thought both:—

Me, sacra Pieridum nutrix, ante omnia raptat
Aurea Libertas; illam sancto omine lætæ
Accipiunt gentes: illâ adveniente beatus
Ridet ager, viget artis honos: ea maxima fovit
Ingenia, Hermocratemque, et sanguine jura Dioclem
Firmantem proprio, legesque in morte sacrantem.
Illa etiam regnandi avidas, rerumque potentes,
Sola Syracosio confregit milite Athenas.
Vos, vacui portus, lateque silentia Thapsi
Littora senta situ, famæque oblita vetustæ,
Vos testor, vidistis enim, quæ prælia vestram
Turbârint requiem, quantas induxerit ægra
Ambitio strages, geminique insania belli!
Nunc quoque (Plemmyrio quamvis sub vertice rarus
Tendit iter, leviterque secat maria alta phaselus
Et, fidei monimenta, cruces, circum ostia fulgent)
Nunc etiam antiquas videor mihi cernere classes
Clangoremque haurire tubæ, mixtosque tumultus
Ad pugnam hortantum et sacrum Pæana canentum.

Heu nox illa malis et acerbo fæta dolore,
Cum jam Cecropidum res fractæ ; et luna labores
Insolitos perpessa fugæ dare terga vetabat !
Longæ alii motus animorum, ubi non sua puppes
Serta coronarunt, et jam clamore secundo
Pandentes velorum alas, Salamine relictâ
Sicanium lætis onerarunt classibus æquor.

Lord Derby published the first book of the *Iliad*, for private circulation, in 1862. Encouraged by the approval of his friends, he then undertook the whole poem, which was completed and published in 1864, and went through six editions in four years.

As to the rank to be allotted to Homer's various translators there will, of course, be different opinions. But I may repeat, without much fear of contradiction, that Lord Derby's is one of the best. Like Lord Carnarvon's, it is in blank verse ; and it has the great, and, for Homer, the pre-eminent merit of rapidity of movement. Lord Derby also has aimed at being literal, and, on the whole, has succeeded better than most of his predecessors. He is, of course, sometimes inaccurate, and sometimes—but very rarely—tame. No translation has ever given the full force of the

Γνοίεν δ', ὥς δὴ δηρὸν ἐγὼ πολέμοιο πέπαυμαι

“They shall know the difference now that I have come back,” as Cardinal Newman turns it. Lord Derby has it :

Then shall all men know
How long I have been absent from the field.

This, I think, is flat ; and in one or two other well-known passages I feel obliged to say the same—of the reply of Achilles to his horse Xanthus, for instance, and the remarks of the Trojan elders as they see

Helen approaching. It is very well to say that Pope is not Homer. But he often makes better Greek scholars than himself look pale by the side of him.

What wonder, Trojans, such resistless charms
For nine long years should keep the world in arms.

After this, we feel little appetite for the following :—

And 'tis no marvel one to other said
The valiant Trojans and the well-greaved Greeks,
For beauty such as this should long endure
The toils of war.

But, on the whole, Lord Derby's version is admirable. His translations of the similes are, generally speaking, both literal and beautiful; and all his heart is in the battle-scenes. I have always thought one of the similes employed by Homer in the description of Achilles arming himself—in the nineteenth book—one of the most beautiful in the poem. The gleam of his armour is described as stretching over the plain like the long trail of light cast upon the sea by a watch-fire on the hills.

Ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἂν ἐκ πόντοιο σέλας ναύτησι φανήῃ
καιομένοιο πυρὸς· τὸ δὲ καίεται ὑψόθ' ὄρεσφιν
σταθμῶ ἐν οἰοπόλῳ· τοὺς δ' οὐκ ἐθέλοντας ἄελλαι
πόντον ἐπ' ἰχθύοεντα φίλων ἀπάνευθε φέρουσιν.

Lord Derby is here, I think, almost equal to his original :—

Or as to seamen o'er the wave is borne
The watchfire's light, which, high among the hills,
Some shepherd kindles in his lonely fold;
As they reluctant by the stormy winds,
Far from their friends are o'er the water driven.

In the famous moonlight scene he runs Lord Tennyson very close. The Laureate beats him in the

οὐρανόθεν δ' ἄρ' ὑπερράγη ἄσπετος αἰθήρ.

And the immeasurable heavens
Break open to the highest.

But at every other point Lord Derby holds his own, and in the translation of ἀριπρεπεία—"Shines every particular star distinct"—perhaps a little more. His own favourite lines were the description of the Grecian host, in the second book, where he thought he had got an equivalent for every single Greek word.

Οἳ δ' ἄρ' ἴσαν ὥς εἴ τε πυρὶ χθὼν πάσα νέμοιτο
γαῖα δ' ὑποστενάχιζε Διὶ ὥς τερπικεραύνῳ
χωομένῳ, ὅτε τ' ἀμφὶ Τυφωεί γαῖαν ἱμάσση
εἰν Ἀρίμοις, ὅθι φασὶ Τυφωέος ἔμμεναι εὐνάς.

Such was the host which, like devouring fire,
O'erspread the land; the earth beneath them groaned:
As when the Lord of Thunder, in his wrath,
The earth's foundations shakes in Arimi,
Where buried deep, 'tis said, Typhœus lies.

It is odd that he should have been less successful with the horses of Eumelus, described only a few lines further back, where Pope, who hardly knew a horse when he saw one, is *facile princeps*. Lord Derby gives his reasons for choosing blank verse; but it would be out of place, in this volume, to enter on any lengthened controversy in regard to the respective merits of blank verse and rhyme, or of the different metres which various translators have adopted. Lord Derby says that heroic blank verse appeared to him to be the only metre equally suitable to Homer in all his moods—"from the finished poetry of the numerous similes, in which every touch is nature, and nothing is over-coloured and exaggerated, down to the simple style

of some portions of the narrative." This, we think, is the best that can be said in favour of this particular metre. It is always in harmony with the subject, and rises and falls with the dignity or familiarity of the topic more readily than any other. This is sufficient justification.

Among his minor translations, which were most of them written before he was thirty, will be found several of which the versification is musical and flowing and the sense faithful to the original. His first venture in Horace was the "*Donec gratus eram*," which appeared with Lord Ravensworth's translations. His other Horatian pieces were published in 1862, in a volume styled "*Translations of Poems, Ancient and Modern*." The *Postumus*, I think, is the best of the Latin versions. But the "*Knight of Toggenburgh*," from the German, is the best of all, and reads quite like one of Scott's ballads. I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of quoting a few of these stanzas, especially, as I suppose, they are very little known to the general public. It is a variation of the old story. The crusader returns from Palestine to find his lady-love not the bride of another, but the bride of Heaven.

He has left for ever the fortress height,
Where his fathers dwelt of yore;
He looks no more on his armour bright
On his trusty steed no more.

And then he hath built him a lowly hut
Beneath the sacred chimes,
Where the walls of the bosomed convent jut
From a grove of shady limes.

His eye was fixed on the convent above,
And the livelong day did he wait
And gaze on the window that held his love,
Till he heard the window grate.

Till that loved one's form from the window leant,
Till he saw her placid brow,
And her angel smile of meek content,
As she looked on the vale below.

And many a day and many a year
The warrior there did wait,
Without a murmur, without a tear,
Till he heard the window grate.

And there one morning, stiff and chill,
He was found a corpse at last,
And the gaze of his cold fixed eye was still
On that convent window cast.

In 1860 M. Jules Janin forwarded to Lord Derby a copy of his own version of Horace, with some laudatory French verses addressed to the English translator. Lord Derby replied, in a letter dated from Knowsley, December 31st, 1860, courteously acknowledging the compliment, but disclaiming all pretension to stand on an equality with M. Jules Janin, as he had at that time published only two odes.

Lord Derby was not the last of the classic statesmen, for we still have Lord Carnarvon and Mr. Gladstone. But with these it seems probable that the breed will finally become extinct. Carteret, Pitt, Fox, Burke, Canning, Greville, and Wellesley were all steeped to their chins in the classical tradition ; and it is said that Burke never wrote without a Delphin Virgil at his elbow. But statesmanship is now too jealous a master to allow to its votaries the enjoyment of these literary deverticula. It insists on their exclusive devotion, while, at the same time, the class of studies and the kind of knowledge which are now required to keep the intellect of the statesman abreast of modern thought, lead him away from the flowery paths of scholarship, and may, in time, perhaps breed even a distaste for them. A

few favoured individuals still exhibit the old combination even under the strain of modern conditions.

Pauci quos æquus amavit,
Jupiter.

But on the whole the scholar statesman of the old *régime*, who flourished in an age when there was scarcely a single member of the House of Commons who was not a public school or university man, and when classical quotations formed a species of Freemasonry by which the members of a small and exclusive social guild recognized each other, will probably become extinct with the nineteenth century. Another hundred years may pass away before so many-sided a man as Lord Derby again appears in public life, taking his place at once in the front rank of statesmen, commanding the enthusiastic devotion of a great political party for nearly a quarter of a century, administering public affairs with distinction on three separate occasions, and universally recognized as the most brilliant orator of his time, yet who, so to speak, took politics in his stride, awarding them only a portion of that time of which so large a share was devoted to literature, scholarship, and field sports.

Lord Derby was very fond of children, and they were very fond of him; and he soon after his marriage composed a little volume called *Conversations on the Parables for the Use of Children*, which is very well adapted for the purpose, and explains many difficulties and apparent contradictions with great clearness and simplicity.

CHAPTER X.

LORD DERBY AS A SPORTSMAN.

Lord Derby's grandfather—Lord Derby's horses—His wagers—At the Jockey Club—John Scott—Canezou—Mr. Adkins—Out shooting—Lord Derby and the Pitmen—His strong language—The menagerie at Knowsley.

LORD DERBY'S sporting tastes were hereditary. His grandfather, as we have seen, founded the two great Epsom races, and, more lucky than his grandson, he won the Derby with Sir Peter Teazle in 1787, and the Oaks with Bridget in 1779, and Hermione in 1794. The latter race received its name from the house at Epsom, known as the Oaks, where a racing party was always assembled for the Epsom week. Hither Greville was invited by Lord Stanley in May 1833, and the picture which he has drawn of the great statesman on whom, even then, "the destiny of the country perhaps depended," absorbed in racing all day, and in whist and blind hookey all night, might almost form a companion picture to Evelyn's "Sunday at Whitehall."

Lord Derby had been brought up to the turf, and, before his grandfather's death, had been entrusted

with his breeding stud both at Knowsley and in Ireland. The first good horse which he ever owned himself was Ithuriel, and others were Dervish, De Clare, Canezou, and Toxophilite. He never had the good fortune to win either the Derby, the Oaks, or the St. Leger. But Ithuriel was considered a certainty for the latter, when he was "got at" by the Ring and lamed just before the race. With Canezou Lord Derby won several great races, among others the Thousand Guineas, the Ebor, St. Leger, the Goodwood Cup, and the Doncaster Cup. She was beaten by Surplice for the St. Leger in 1848, and by Flying Dutchman for the Emperor's Cup in 1850. But Lord Derby always bore his disappointments with perfect equanimity; and perhaps never had more need of it than in 1858, when, as we have mentioned, Toxophilite, first favourite for the Derby, was just beaten by Beadsman. Lord Derby had, of course, always coveted the blue riband of the turf; but at that time he was Prime Minister too, and he had set his heart on what he called the double event. The general public took a lively interest in this particular race, and all over the country hundreds of persons were talking of Toxophilite, who had never seen a race in their lives, and hardly knew a horse from an ass.

In the year 1863 Lord Derby sold his stud, and retired from the Turf; but he will long be remembered as one of its greatest ornaments and most popular patrons. Lord Derby exhibited in racing just the same love of victory for its own sake which distinguished him in politics. He did not want to win money, but winning money was the only test of superior judgment on the Turf, and therefore it had to be done. Similarly at cards, whether the stakes

were high or low, he displayed the same eagerness to win—*αἰεν ἀπιστεύειν*. Accordingly, on the Turf he never hesitated to avail himself of every advantage which the laws of racing tolerated; and if he won a wager because he had better information than the man with whom he laid it, so much the worse for the loser. That was the game.

In his best days Lord Derby was the life and soul of the great race-meetings; and he was probably never happier in his life than when sitting down to dinner at the Jockey Club rooms at Newmarket, in the palmy days of the Club, or what the *laudator temporis acti* considers to have been such. Full of wit, anecdote, and repartee, here he reigned without a rival, and gave way to the natural exuberance of his spirits, without a thought of appearances, or of what the world might say. Thus, not more than a month after he had been invited by his Sovereign to undertake the government of the country, and had explained the reason of his refusal to the House of Lords in a speech full of dignity and gravity, he was seen at Newmarket, the centre of a crowd of blacklegs, betting Lord Glasgow that he would not sneeze within a given time, let him take as many pinches of snuff as he might. The laughter of the mob was, of course, uproarious, and Stanley's as loud as anyone's.*

Lord Derby never had any other trainer than John Scott, with whom he maintained an unbroken inti-

* "There he was in the midst of a crowd of blacklegs, betting men, and loose characters of every description. . . . His amusement was to lay Lord Glasgow a wager that he did not sneeze in a given time, for which purpose he took pinch after pinch of snuff," &c. &c.—*Greville Papers*, Second Series, vol. iii. p. 403. "A crowd of blacklegs" is perhaps a strong expression.

macy for two-and-twenty years. It was his delight to escape from London to his trainer's house at Whitewall, and early the next morning to be out on Langton Wold to see his horses gallop. After a debate in the House of Lords he has frequently gone off by the night mail to the north, arriving in time to see the horses out by break of day. He would often sit up all night with John Scott, talking racing talk, the two regaling each other with choice anecdotes till it was time to turn out for business. It has been calculated that the horses trained by John Scott won for him altogether during the twenty-two years aforesaid £94,000 in stakes.

Lord Derby was very fond of Canezou, who was kept in a paddock at Knowsley till the infirmities of age increased upon her so much that it became at length a mercy to shoot her. She outlived her old master some years, and, together with his paddock-groom, Timothy Forshaw, was provided for in his will. The two, in fact, were left to keep each other company; Timothy being retained in his house for life with little or nothing to do but to look after Canezou. Her hoofs were converted into inkstands, one for John Scott, one for Colonel Stanley, one for the groom Forshaw, and one for Admiral Wyndham Hornby. This, on his leaving Knowsley, was presented by Admiral Hornby to the Jockey Club, and may now be seen on their table in the rooms at Newmarket.

To show how careful Lord Derby was for the honour of the Turf, he, in 1857, addressed a letter to the Jockey Club, which is now often quoted as a Turf classic. In that year, 1857, a person named Adkins, who was also connected with the Turf, was convicted

of winning money from a gentleman at a "hell" in Albemarle Street by means of loaded dice. Lord Derby's letter was to the following effect:—

My Lords,—It has become a subject of general observation and regret that the number of men of station and fortune who support the turf is gradually diminishing, and that an increasing proportion of horses in training is in the hands of persons in an inferior position, who keep them not for the purposes of sport, but as mere instruments of gambling.

This, he owns, it is beyond the powers of the Jockey Club to prevent. But still, when men of this class are convicted of "disgraceful fraud and dishonesty," the Jockey Club has the power to "exclude them from associating on an equal footing with the more honourable supporters of the Turf." He accordingly gave notice of a Resolution warning Mr. Adkins off the heath at Newmarket and any other ground over which the Jockey Club had authority. The Resolution, it is needless to say, was unanimously adopted. Lord Derby himself never made a book. He would have a sporting bet with a friend, which he was always very keen to win, simply from the love of victory; but he never laid himself out to win money systematically.

Next to racing, Lord Derby's passion was shooting; and though he preserved game very strictly he never heard any complaints of it. He was, indeed, so popular with all classes in his own neighbourhood, that the farmers and peasantry would have endured a good deal rather than interfere with his pleasure. But Lord Derby probably took care that they should have nothing to endure that was not abundantly made up to them in other ways. Some of his covers adjoined the coal-pits; and with the colliers he was on

excellent terms. They never touched his game, but always turned out in large numbers to see the covers shot, enjoying the sport keenly, and betting eagerly on the guns. The pitmen indeed literally worshipped him, and knew that they were sure of his indulgence or forbearance on any just cause. On one occasion when his party was approaching the pits, a deputation waited on the Earl to beg him not to allow a particular hare to be shot. She had made her form on one of the "spoil banks," as the mounds are called on which the refuse is deposited, and the men had tamed her so that she would eat out of their hands. It is needless to say that their prayer was granted, and an edict issued placing puss under protection for the remainder of her natural existence. On these occasions he was always attended by some of his tenantry, with whom he laughed and joked at his ease. He relied, like Charles the Second, on his ready wit to extricate himself from any difficulties into which his love of fun might lead him; and it certainly never fell in vain on the ears of the Lancashire farmers. Serviceable, however, as such a weapon is in very many social emergencies, it may be that Lord Derby sometimes wielded it indiscreetly; and it has been said that it was while shooting with Sir Robert Peel in the days of their intimacy that he first gave umbrage to his more sober-minded chief, by some of those outbreaks of flippancy to which I have before referred. Like many other wits, however, Lord Derby did not always relish a joke against himself. Once in shooting at a partridge he killed two or three geese which were hidden from him by a hedge. But he never could bear the slightest allusion to it afterwards.

Lord Derby's battues were of the usual character,

and I have been told by those who were present that one of his peculiarities was a strong dislike to hearing anyone asking for caps. We are speaking of the days of muzzle-loaders ; and Lord Derby, who was always ready to provide his guests with powder and shot, drew the line at caps. If it came to his knowledge that anyone of the party was unprovided with them, the offender forthwith had a piece of his host's mind conveyed to him in that vigorous and expressive phraseology of which, according to one report, Lord Derby was a great master, but which has now unhappily become obsolete. It was a language which everybody understood, and by which before the Flood nobody was offended. Mr. Fox, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Lyndhurst, and other great men seem to have derived great comfort from it. Once when Lord Derby was laid up with the gout, Colonel Talbot, his own son-in-law and private secretary, went out shooting by himself at Knowsley and killed twenty-four woodcocks. The next day Colonel Wilson Patten, afterwards Lord Winmarleigh, called to see Lord Derby. The patient's first impulse was to cry aloud, "What do you think that d——d fellow, Pat Talbot, has been and done! He has been and shot twenty-four woodcocks with his own gun, and I lie here." I have related this story elsewhere. But to show what difficulties attend the discovery of truth, I have been assured quite recently by one of Lord Derby's most intimate and confidential friends that Lord Derby never swore in his life.

Lord Derby, though very short-sighted, was a good shot, and fond of the sport in all its branches. He was fond at one time of shooting partridges over spaniels, using a team of five or six, all broken in to

work within a few yards of him. Of his keenness for wild-fowl shooting we have heard Lord Malmesbury's account. It is not likely that he was indifferent to ornithology or natural history, few real sportsmen are ; but the menagerie at Knowsley had cost such large sums of money that when Lord Derby succeeded to the estate in 1851 he was obliged to break it up. The cages and houses were converted into labourers' cottages, and of the birds and animals some were sold, some presented to the Queen, and some to the Zoological Gardens.

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

The obituary notices of Lord Derby—His actual achievements—Comparison with Burke—Then and now—His services to Conservatism—His sense of Duty—The Constitution of 1688—Attitude towards the Irish Church—The chief of a great party—The responsibility for the present situation—His rupture with Liberalism—His real greatness.

THE obituary notices which followed Lord Derby's death, and to which I have already referred, only show how quickly the work of a statesman's youth is forgotten amid the new questions and interests which attend the close of his career. Lord Derby's death occurred just at that moment when the new Liberal Party created by Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone was at the height of its triumph, and when the Conservative policy of 1867 seemed to have brought nothing but disgrace and ruin on its authors. Their reputation probably never stood lower than during the Session of 1869, and many persons have been naturally sorry that Lord Derby was not spared to witness the great Conservative victory of 1874, which proved, at all events, that popular Toryism was

no dream, and that in enfranchising the working classes he had not been leaning on a broken reed—*Dis aliter visum*. And what, perhaps, is more to be regretted than the disappointment of his own hopes is the fact that he was taken from us at a moment when the world was least disposed to adopt a favourable view of his career, or to recognise the greatness of the part which he had played upon the political stage. Let us consider how it would have fared with Lord Beaconsfield had he died at the same time, and what kind of epitaphs would have greeted us the following morning in the principal Metropolitan journals. If we turn to the different memoirs of Lord Derby which appeared at this date, we find many of them written in a carping and depreciatory spirit, which would hardly be manifested now should his character and career again be brought prominently before the public notice. Of what he had actually done some tried to rob him of the credit; while others, with audacity proportioned to their ignorance, declared that he had done nothing. It was confidently asserted that, with all his splendid opportunities and brilliant talents, his name was written in water. Of a public life extending over nearly half a century, of which thirteen years were passed in high office, and four in the highest of all, he had left, said his critics, no enduring memorial, and would be known only to posterity as one of the splendid failures with which the pages of history are crowded. He mistook the signs of the times, and all that he most vigorously resisted he lived to see effected.

We are not, however, justified in saying that because he cannot prevent the changes of which he disapproves, the statesman is therefore necessarily

blind to the signs of the times. He may see them only too clearly. But when it is said of Lord Derby that he bequeathed to posterity no lasting monument of his genius, the answer requires to be given at somewhat greater length. If Lord Derby's share in the passing of the first Reform Bill, and the decisive part which he played in the maintenance of the Act of Union; if the Irish Education Act, the Church Temporalities Act, the scheme for the settlement of Irish tithes, which, though unsuccessful, was a most statesman-like conception; and last, but not least, the Abolition of Slavery Act, are no monuments of statesmanship, where are we to seek them? It has been contended that his tenure of the Colonial Office was a blank. Yet how that can be said with justice of the author of two great measures deeply affecting the prosperity of two of our most important colonial possessions—Canada and the West Indies—I am at a loss to understand. Again, the Act of 1858 for bringing our Indian Empire under the direct government of the Crown, and the Act of 1867 for extending the Parliamentary franchise to the working classes, are as important measures as any that have been passed during the present century, excepting only the Roman Catholic Act of 1829, and the Reform Bill of 1832. On looking back to the very brief periods of time during which Lord Derby held office, and considering the work which he accomplished as Chief Secretary for Ireland, as Secretary for the Colonies, and as Prime Minister, it is really difficult to understand what was meant by those who dwelt upon his "wasted opportunities."

But let it be admitted, for the sake of argument, that Lord Derby is to be judged rather as a defen-

sive than as a constructive or creative statesman; does that necessarily exclude him from the front rank? I am not now speaking of the bright particular stars which ever and anon become visible in the political firmament, the Richelieus, the Pitts, the Bismarcks; but of the men who have stood forward from time to time as recognised political leaders, claiming and receiving the confidence of great masses of their countrymen. Does the fact that such a man adopted a defensive, or, in other words, a Conservative attitude, necessarily imply that his genius was of a lower order than that of the aggressive and destructive politician? On the contrary, the defensive position is often the more difficult of the two, demanding greater foresight, greater fortitude, greater grasp of mind, and more passionate and stirring eloquence.

I will take Burke as an example. Will anyone pretend to say that the part which he took in arresting the revolutionary movement, the courage, the eloquence, the deep thought and deep feeling, which he poured into his efforts, are not as signal notes of political genius as the overthrow of institutions, the invasion of property, and the destruction of the principle of authority? I am not comparing Lord Derby to Mr. Burke, nor am I concerned to show that Burke was either right or wrong. I say that the defence of what he defended may call into play quite as high an order of faculties as the destruction of what others have destroyed. If we ask what enduring memorial of himself Burke left behind him, we do not point to new laws or administrative reforms, to great victories or conquered provinces; we point to the monarchy, the aristocracy,

the British Constitution; these are the permanent witnesses to Burke's greatness, the credit of preserving which he shares in common with Mr. Pitt. I am not, I repeat, comparing Lord Derby to Burke. No two men could be more unlike, though between the previous antagonism and subsequent co-operation of Burke and Pitt there is something more than a superficial resemblance to the relations between Peel and Stanley. But I do say that at a crisis not wholly dissimilar to that which called forth all the powers of the great eighteenth-century statesman, Lord Derby leaped into the breach, seized by the throat one of the greatest orators and most powerful demagogues who ever sat in the House of Commons, and fairly choked him off his prey. Was this nothing? Was it nothing to have saved the Union for more than another generation? Is the "integrity of the Empire" no enduring memorial of a statesman's greatness?

The adverse criticism to which Lord Derby was subjected would surprise us less, indeed, at the present day. But twenty years ago the conception of the Government as a mere grinding machine for converting opinion into law was less universally diffused than it has been during recent years. Judged, however, even by the most modern standard, we do not see that the author of such measures as the above-mentioned need shrink from the test; while, if we recur to the pre-democratic period, and compare Lord Derby as a legislator with some of the principal statesmen who have governed this country since the Revolution, he has nothing to lose by the comparison. With what great measure is the name of Lord Palmerston associated? With what

great measure was the name of Mr. Canning associated? With what great measure is the name of Sir Robert Walpole associated? Various measures of importance were passed, no doubt, during Lord Palmerston's administration, but he himself was not the author of them. The honour is divided between Mr. Gladstone and Lord Westbury. Lord Palmerston's reputation rests, and always will rest, on something quite apart from the work of legislation; on his conduct of our foreign policy, and the famous principle embodied in his *Civis Romanus sum*. Exactly the same may be said of Mr. Canning; and all that need be recorded of Sir Robert Walpole is, that he consolidated the Revolution Settlement.

I am not now saying whether Lord Derby was as great a man as any of these three, or a greater; I only say that if a statesman is to be judged by the number of great measures which he adds to the statute book, Lord Derby was the greatest of all. But I do not think that a statesman is to be so judged. I think we should look rather to the moral power which high character, commanding abilities, and vivid eloquence are calculated to exercise upon the age in which a statesman lives—to the general effect which he produces on the political and social thought of his own generation; and to the example which he sets when placed in difficult and trying situations, and called upon to choose between his personal inclinations and what he believes to be for the public good. Now the part which Lord Derby played as distinct from the province of the law-giver, was quite as important as that played by Lord Palmerston or Mr. Canning. It was by his character and his genius,

not by any legislative or tactical dexterity, that he raised the Conservative Party from the dust. The particular service which he rendered to it was what neither Mr. Disraeli nor any other living statesman could have rendered. He was the link between the popular Toryism of Mr. Disraeli and the more old-fashioned Conservatism of the English aristocracy. They listened to him when they would have listened to no one else. He was the interpreter without whom the party as a whole could never have been educated ; or that Conservative feeling developed among the working classes which was the direct result of the Reform Bill of 1867, and is the one thing we have now to rely upon for the safety of the Constitution and the Empire.

When we reflect that all this was done by Lord Derby "against the collar," during the intervals of severe illness, and without the stimulus which sustains most public men under similar fatigues and disappointments—the hope, that is, of ultimate victory, and of one day being able in their turn

To mould a mighty States' decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne—

when we remember still further that the most arduous part of his career was only then beginning, just when he himself was in hopes that it was ending, who can be ungenerous enough not to recognise the sense of duty which responded at once to the appeal of a kindred spirit, and the force of an example suggestive of unqualified patriotism? For Lord Derby, if he had ever nourished the legitimate ambition which may be presumed to animate the vast majority of English statesmen, had parted with

it before he became Prime Minister; and though he still revelled in the delights of Parliamentary debate, felt his health unequal to the responsibilities of real power, and only accepted it as part of the necessary programme which he felt himself pledged to carry out in deference to the counsels of the Duke of Wellington.

Lord Derby regarded the Constitution of 1688 as the basis of modern politics, though in several important questions he adopted the Tory views of William Pitt and Mr. Canning. He did not believe that Parliamentary reform would affect the Constitution of 1688. But he did feel that the disestablishment of the Church of England in any part of the United Kingdom would vitally affect it. He did not agree with Sheil, that there was no difference between boroughs without constituents and churches without congregations. It was impossible that Old Sarum, Great Bedwyn, or Ludgershall should ever again become large and flourishing towns; and, if they did, the franchise could be restored to them. But the Church existed in Ireland for the express purpose of filling her empty fabrics with worshippers. That was her mission and her final cause. As Stanley himself said, the essence of an Established Church was its universality. She must be present everywhere. The nomination boroughs represented only a convenient practice for upholding the influence of property, an end which might be attained by other means. But the Church in Ireland represented Divine truth, which could be propagated in no other way.* If he thought that the time had arrived when certain

* Cf. Mr. Gladstone's speech on the Irish Church Bill.—*Hansard*, vol. xxxiii. p. 1317.

securities might safely be removed, he did not mean that his convictions in favour of maintaining inviolate the connection between Church and State were in the slightest degree altered. He thought that Roman Catholic Emancipation, the admission of Dissenters to the Universities, and the appointment of Roman Catholic jail chaplains might all be conceded without the slightest danger to the Established Church.

Lord Derby, it is true, could not save the Irish Church. But he prolonged her existence, as he himself said, for thirty-three years, and prevented that premature disestablishment which, even in the opinion of Mr. Gladstone himself, would have been a great misfortune. It was not Sir Robert Peel, or Mr. Gladstone, or the Duke of Wellington, or Lord Lyndhurst, who saved the Irish Church during the first reformed Parliament, but Lord Derby. More than that, in fighting the battle of the Irish Church he was fighting the battle of the English Church, which is not lost. The effect of his example in 1834 is not spent yet, nor have his speeches on the great principle then at stake borne all the fruit which they are destined to bear.

As the leader of the Conservative Party from 1846 to 1868, he brought all his great powers to the aid of the Constitution, while he largely contributed to restore the *morale* of the party, which had been grievously shaken by the defection of its former leaders, and the consciousness of no longer possessing the confidence of the constituencies. To the wonderful ability displayed by Mr. Disraeli in his reorganization of the Conservative opposition during Lord John Russell's Government justice has been done elsewhere. To him the first honours are due. But the two men were neces-

sary to each other. Each supplied what the other wanted. Mr. Disraeli was the great Parliamentary architect. But Lord Derby did most to restore the prestige of the party in the country at large. It is impossible that the statesman who, in a revolutionary age, leads the defensive forces of society for a period of twenty-two years should not always occupy a distinguished place in our political history. But, under our present system of Parliamentary and Party Government, to be the acknowledged chief of one of the two great parties in the State for nearly a quarter of a century, is by itself a certificate of greatness.

A statesman in this position is second only to the Prime Minister. He largely influences the policy and government of the country. Sometimes, as the phrase runs, though out of office he is in power. Sir Robert Peel from 1835 to 1841 was in this position. Lord Derby from 1860 to 1865 was practically in this position. A party leader, therefore, at the present day, when changes are so frequent and power so precarious, is invested with responsibilities and functions unknown to the Opposition of a former age, and can scarcely maintain such a position for a long term of years without being in some sense a great statesman, if he does nothing else worthy of the name. In comparing the claims on our respect of offensive and defensive statesmanship, we must not be led astray by false analogies. The action of a Conservative Party in resisting changes which time, "the friend of the destroyer," is sure to bring about at last, is too often likened to the conduct of a general in continuing to oppose an enemy when all hope of a successful resistance has vanished, and abandoning one position

after another, which he should have known from the first to be untenable. In reality there is scarcely even a superficial resemblance between the two cases. In war a hopeless defence, unless it answers some collateral object, is always worse than useless. But in politics a defence which is hopeless in the sense of not being maintainable for ever, may effect a vast deal of good if it defers even for a short time the destruction of laws and institutions which experience has proved to be for the benefit of society at large.

The comparative value of different political institutions is still a moot point, and likely to remain so. None is so good perhaps but what we may pay too dear for its preservation; none so bad but what we may pay too dear for its destruction. One good test, perhaps the best, is their influence upon national character. There are those who think that the English character is the best in the world, and that it is largely indebted for its excellence to English institutions. They think that the principles of Government and society which prevail in this country, the mixture of subordination and liberty, of social privilege and political equality, which gives every man something to look up to, and every man something to be proud of, and which cherishes reverence without impairing independence, is more favourable than any other with which they are acquainted not only to the formation of a healthy moral tone in the nation at large, but also to the actual happiness of the labouring multitude. There are those who think differently, and imagine that where these inequalities prevail the shadow of social superiority falling upon the lower grades of society checks the growth and development of human energy and self-reliance. I do not judge

between the two ; but as long as the former theory holds its ground in political philosophy, it is the duty of a statesman who believes in it to strain every nerve to prolong the life of institutions which produce so salutary an effect to the last possible moment. If he shall secure to his countrymen for only another generation the benefit of living under laws so favourable to the growth of those solid and masculine virtues which have long been the boast of Englishmen, he will not have lived in vain, and may well be satisfied with leaving no other record on his tombstone.

A strong confirmation of this view is to be derived, I think, from the complaints of those converted Liberals who now profess to think, not that Lord Derby was wrong in trying to "stem the tide of democracy," but that he did not stem it firmly enough. They point to the Reform Bill of 1867 as a great dereliction of duty on the part of the Conservative leader ; and if they are told that between the ten-pound suffrage and the rating suffrage there was really no permanent abiding place, their answer always is that the evil day might have been deferred. "We need not have had it all at once." Whether it could have been deferred long enough to make the delay worth the cost is a doubtful question. But, at all events, here is the Conservative argument, pure and simple, coming from the mouths of their opponents. If resistance to household suffrage *was* hopeless, they say, in the sense of not being maintainable for ever, it was not therefore useless. To have secured thirty years more of good government would by itself have been a perfectly good justification of it.

The responsibility for the present situation rests with those who, in 1851, 1852, 1855, and 1858, refused

to join Lord Derby in reuniting the Conservative Party, and who afterwards threw down all the safeguards introduced into the Bill of 1867. Had such a party been formed democracy might have been arrested; as it was, it could only be escorted. Liberals who, in 1889, find fault with Lord Derby for not having made a stand against Radicalism twenty and thirty years ago, should remember who they were who prevented him from doing it—the Whigs and Liberals themselves.

If Lord Derby did less than was expected of him, we must remember to what it was due, and should respect him all the more instead of blaming him for the results of a sacrifice which was made in the cause of conscience. When he left the Whig Government in 1834 the leadership of the party was at his feet, with a brilliant future of almost boundless promise before him. That he voluntarily descended from this great position and was content to take a second place, when he might have had the first, simply for the sake of great principle, in which he had no personal interest, is surely as strong a proof of political sincerity and patriotic self-denial as any statesman can be called upon to give. Had he chosen to stifle his convictions, all that political life has to offer to an English statesman was assured to him; and we must remember that Lord Derby's aversion to the toils of office which grew upon him in his later years had not begun then. He was then an ambitious man, and as eager for political distinction as Palmerston or Russell.

It seems to me to be the first duty of the biographer, whether on a small scale or a large one, to bring out this side of Lord Derby's character into strong relief.

That in his later years, when all his efforts to reorganize the Conservative Party on a broad basis had been unsuccessful, he may have shrunk from the uphill and apparently hopeless fight which was so gallantly urged by Mr. Disraeli, and have abandoned himself with less restraint to pursuits of a very different character, will be allowed, I think, by his warmest admirers. But what is too often forgotten is, that but for his own inflexible adherence to what he believed to be the truth, he would not have been placed in such a position; that he would have been the leader of the Liberal majority, combining in his own person the hereditary claims of Lord John Russell and the personal prowess of Lord Palmerston; that his path would have been made easy for him instead of difficult, and that he might have appropriated to himself all the power and popularity ultimately secured by one who, till he had passed the allotted term of human life, was never dreamed of as a leader.

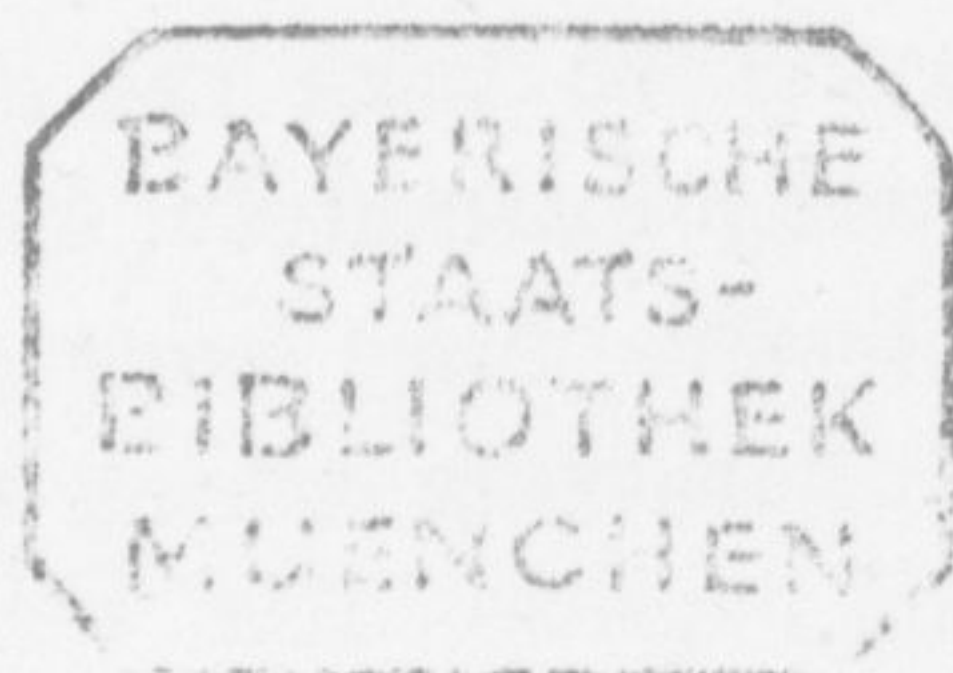
Finally, it may be said once more that Lord Derby's character and temperament were such as fitted him rather to be a ruler than a legislator. His mind readily embraced large general principles, but shrank from details, though none could master them more thoroughly when any special emergency required it. Placed in a position where he was sure of his ground, and not obliged to put on armour which he had not proved, with a steady Parliamentary majority of the old type, and concerned solely with questions belonging to the higher sphere of politics, Lord Derby's reputation might have been inferior to none which are enshrined in our Parliamentary annals. But amid the quicksands and eddies of a transition

period, and the rapid fluctuations of public opinion, such as debar even the most popular statesman from that sense of security which is essential to the free play of the political intellect, Lord Derby was less qualified to move, or to do justice to the splendid qualities with which nature had endowed him.

Few statesmen have been painted by their contemporaries in such various colours as the late Lord Derby. He was unfortunate enough to incur the enmity of a very distinguished group of statesmen remarkable for the vindictive pertinacity with which they cherished their political feuds: while at the same time he had accepted the services of a colleague whom they hated more bitterly than himself. Hence, no pains have been spared to misrepresent his policy, to depreciate his genius, and to tarnish his character. Lord Aberdeen professed to think him no orator; Lord Clarendon declared that he was totally void of generosity. I have endeavoured to give an account of his policy which may perhaps induce some of those who have too readily accepted an unfavourable version of it to reconsider their judgment. The second charge, that he was no orator, may safely be left to public opinion. On the third, I prefer to take the estimate of those who knew Lord Derby intimately, both in public and in private life, and who have ever regarded him as one of the noblest characters which the English aristocracy has produced.

It may be that the truth, as usual, lies between the two extremes. But it does not lie half-way. That he was a virtuous, honourable, and extremely warm-hearted man there is evidence to prove which no court of law could reject. Innumerable instances might be cited of his kindness and liberality, and this, too, at a

time when he was far from a rich man himself. That he experienced great want of generosity from his political opponents is matter of history. But what evidence there is to show that he treated others in the same way as they treated him I have yet to learn. On the question of honesty, it certainly does not lie in the mouths of either Whigs or Peelites to charge Lord Derby with the want of it. The history of the Appropriation Clause, of Roman Catholic Emancipation, and of the later stages of Parliamentary Reform is enough to silence detraction from those quarters. I must not, however, be led into an essay on political morality. It is sufficient to say that, after studying Lord Derby's public life, and conversing with contemporaries of his own standing who are not blind to his faults, I see no reason for doubting the substantial justice of the estimate formed of him by the nation at large, namely, that he was a statesman of the first rank, a brilliant and courageous orator, and a liberal and high-minded gentleman, all of whose ideas and aspirations were worthy of his ancient lineage, and of the great political assemblies in which he played so memorable a part.



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